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ISSUE 345 • JULY 2006

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Giant Magic
Giant Demons

**Delve the Depths
of the Demonomicon!**
Ecology of the Annis Hag
3 Sinister Sea Serpents



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Dragon

VOL. XXXI NUMBER 2
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SELLING ITSELF

A few weeks ago I ran into legendary *DRAGON* editor Kim Mohan while wandering the halls of Wizards of the Coast. Kim took the reins of this magazine in issue #49, guiding it through its most popular period, when the early 80s fad status of *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS* brought with it Saturday morning cartoons, national controversy, and more than 100,000 regular *DRAGON* readers. When long-time readers speak fondly of *DRAGON*'s proud past, they're usually thinking of Kim's era. These days Kim's the managing editor for the D&D line—just about every book with the D&D logo crosses his desk before it goes to the printer. I was pleased to see him, and awkwardly shuffled through my papers while standing just outside the elevator. I'd come to Wizards for final approval of *DRAGON* #344, and I wanted to show Kim a color printout of Steve Prescott's beautiful cover for the issue.

"That's a nice cover," Kim said earnestly, shaking his head in wonder. "Thirty years!"

I couldn't stop myself from a bit of self-criticism. "It is a stunning cover," I said. "I only wish we didn't have to put these blurbs all over the art to convince people to buy it."

Kim nodded knowingly. Back in his era, art from folks like Larry Elmore or Keith Parkinson was seldom obscured by text like "8 Awesome Monsters in this Issue!" or "3 Sinister Sea Serpents!" It was a different time.

"The idea back then, of course," Kim added sagely, "was that the magazine sold itself."

The magazine doesn't sell itself anymore. These days, keeping the audience interested and engaged in the magazine involves a near-scientific balance of the right editorial content, great covers with sell text to make it jump off the shelves, and a steady stream of special content like posters and other premiums. There are a lot of voices clamoring for your dollar these days that the magazine didn't have to deal with in the early 80s: a legion of d20 publishers churning out D&D-compatible material, the endless (and often free) wonders of the World Wide Web, and even an aggressive publishing schedule of official D&D content that takes what might once have been a single *DRAGON* article and expands it into an excellent hardcover volume.

The game industry itself has had a tough couple of years, with hundreds of game retailers shutting down their opera-

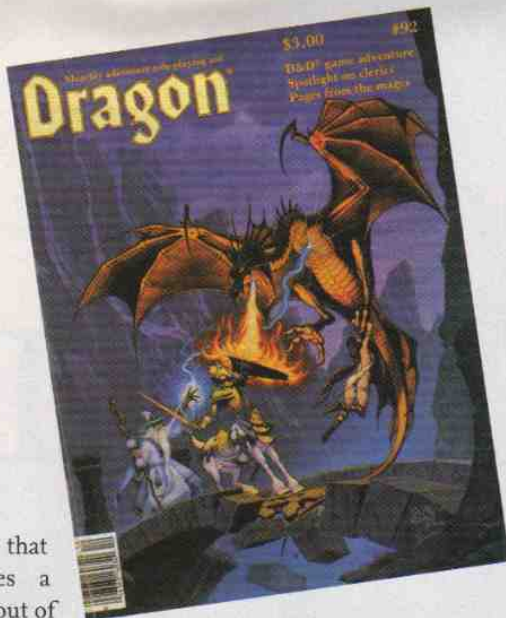
tions. Each store that goes under takes a handful of copies out of circulation. Once you've got several hundred handfals, the impact is profound.

Magazines across the board are seeing their circulations dwindle as newsstand competition grows more and more fierce and as corporate consolidation puts the decision of which magazines to carry into the hands of fewer and fewer people. Think about where you've purchased *DRAGON* in the past. Is the magazine still available there?

Subscriptions are only part of the answer. I'm very happy to report that subscription trends for both *DRAGON* and *DUNGEON* magazines are positive, and that we expect to see significant growth in both magazines this year. More subscriptions is great for us, but newsstand sales are incredibly important too. Every *DRAGON* magazine at your local bookstore or game store is one potential new reader, and every new reader is a potential lifelong fan of *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS* and a player in your next campaign. Our newsstand distribution ensures that D&D reaches all corners of the United States and beyond.

There are some encouraging signs on the horizon. Reader response to new features like the *Demonicon* of Iggwily and *Core Beliefs* is overwhelmingly positive, and (according to our reader surveys) most folks now believe that *DRAGON* magazine is on the right editorial path. New game stores are appearing to replace those that have fallen even as huge retailers like Barnes & Noble are realizing how important specialty magazines sales are to their business. But these places are only going to carry *DRAGON*, *DUNGEON*, and other niche magazines if you ask for them and buy them.

Because these days, nothing sells itself.

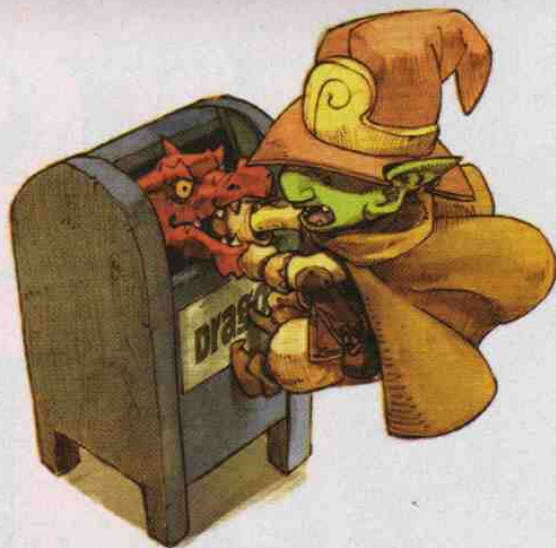


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SCALE MAIL

Tell us what you think of this issue. Send an email to scalemail@paizo.com. Please include your name, city, and state.



NOT FUNNY ENOUGH

Issue #342 of *DRAGON* was an excellent issue. I loved it all. Core Beliefs is an excellent feature, simply because it's good to see *GREYHAWK* is still among the living. "Beyond the Pale" was quite intriguing, although it reminded me of "Dead or Alive?" (from issue #210). "Ecology of the Adventurer" was laugh out loud funny.

Now that I've said that I loved it, here comes the inevitable however:

While this was a great issue of *DRAGON*, it was by my standards only an okay April issue of *DRAGON*. There are two things I look forward to every year: The April issue of *DRAGON* and the October issue of *DRAGON*. My favorite things to find in an April issue of *DRAGON* are funny articles that can be brought to the game table, like "The Crazy Book of Mog" from issue #204, "The Factions" in issue #216, and the "Monstrous Compendium" in issue #156.

Thanks for listening.

Justin Taylor
Walker, MI

As you might have caught from Erik's editorial in #342, the topic of funny April issues is a point of contention that comes up here about the same time every year. While it's true that humorous issues are part of the magazine's history and represent a tradition we'd be loath to end, just mentioning *DRAGON*'s April issue brings to mind images of raver gummi bears and "funny" filk songs that don't quite work.

Now, admittedly, some would say that I came in late in the game, and the first April issue I remember actually had a picture of a



flumph disguised as pancakes. So, perhaps a bit jaded, I decided to give few of the back-issues you mentioned a look. Forgive me if the doughy lothario offering a bouquet to some tarted-up beholder on #156's cover did not immediately change my mind. (This is all the more disturbing considering their anatomy from *Lords of Madness*, but I digress.) Flipping to an article that starts with the pun "Our new bestiary—or maybe it's our worstiary" and reading through, I have to admit: death sheep, pigoatoads, and killer spruce—pretty funny. Seeing the tin golem that just got an overhaul in *DRAGON* #341 was also an Easter egg I wasn't expecting. Score one for the nostalgia team.

So, while I wouldn't hold my breath for a hundred pages of questionable comedy

next time April rolls around, rest assured that humor will always be a part of the magazine. While we're not going to let our attempts at humor trump cool new rules and ideas for your D&D game, you can bet that every April we'll mix in bits (like Tony Moseley's "Ecology of the Adventurer") that are legitimately pretty funny.

Or, at least, things that we think are funny. —WS

BEHOLDERS GET TAN LINES???

A few Octobers ago (Scale Mail, *DRAGON* #324) you asked for reader response to the idea of a *DRAGON* swimsuit issue to include beholders in bikinis. I know this is a year and a half out of date, but for some reason that mental image has been stuck in my head ever since.

I'm sending along the picture that resulted when I finally had no choice but to paint the scene myself. I hope you guys are proud of yourselves.

Thanks!

Mike Rayhawk
Via Email

AWESOME ART

I am a long-time gamer and ardent subscriber to both *DRAGON* and *DUNGEON* magazines, but I have only written in a handful of times. I'm writing today about the fantastic art I've been seeing lately! The first was the cover art of Juiblex on *DUNGEON* #132 (sorry, I don't know the artist's names—the magazines are filed away right now), but was quickly followed by the artwork of the fang dragon Xyzanth attacking the ballista of Kongen-Thulnir on page 64 of *DUNGEON* #133. Then, lo and behold, I was surprised with the stunning white dragon on the cover of *DRAGON* #342 and Dragotha on *DUNGEON* #134! Now I see a preview for *DRAGON* #344 with an outstanding portrait of Tiamat herself!

I was writing to inquire if it is at all possible to acquire these works of art as... well, works of art? Something portrait-sized I can proudly hang from the walls of my home! Is there any intention of offering these pieces to subscribers or making them available at wizards.com?

Thanks very much! Keep up the great work on both *DUNGEON* and *DRAGON* magazines.

Alfred J. Garcia
Anaheim, CA

While we don't have plans to release special prints of *DRAGON* covers, we are currently at work on *The Art of DRAGON Magazine: 30 Years of the World's Best Fantasy Art*, a 160-page hardcover treasury of the finest art from our first three decades. Look for the book this winter in bookstores and hobby stores everywhere. With art from

folks like Wayne Reynolds, Larry Elmore, Keith Parkinson, Brom, Todd Lockwood, Steve Prescott, and more, you definitely won't want to miss it. —EM

KEEP IT UP

I am a new reader and subscriber to your magazine, as well as a new D&D player. First of all I love your magazine. It helps young players such as my brother and me better understand the rules. I especially love the Class Acts. But why do you only put a lot of the basic classes? I am making a new character at the moment to start playing the Age of Worms Adventure Path, and I was hoping to see something for my character, a warmage!

Now I have a complaint about readers. Not enough people are teaching their kids about D&D. If we are not careful those who play D&D will be reduced to but a few. Yes I know D&D has been around for a long time, but still.

But thank you very much for helping my brother and me out. So keep the Class Acts coming and congrats on thirty years of helping kids like me survive the world of D&D.

Kai Hull
Via Email

Hey, we're glad to hear that we're actually helping. Keep checking in with those Class Acts. Since issue #339 we've been dividing that section down the lines of Wizards of the Coast's "Complete" line of books (Complete Arcane, Complete Divine, etc) and try to offer information supporting all the classes those books focus on. At the moment we're not sitting on any warmage Class Acts, but it's just a matter of time until someone writes one. In fact, if you have any ideas, feel free to drop us a proposal at dragon@paizo.com.

Have fun with your game and be sure to show your friends how to play. One fun adventure can do more to get new folks interested than all the cool advertising in the world. Good luck! —WS

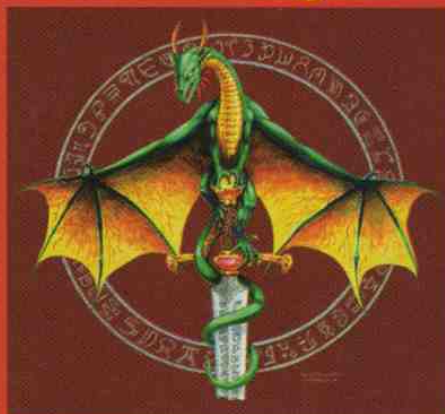
OOPS!

The fantastic artwork depicting the threats of air, sea, and beyond in *DRAGON* #343's "Take Cover" article was unfortunately misattributed. Our apologies to the feature's actual artist, Warren Mahy, for the mistake.

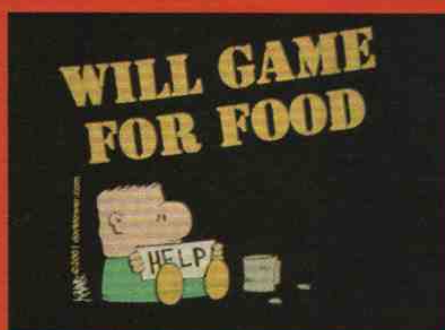
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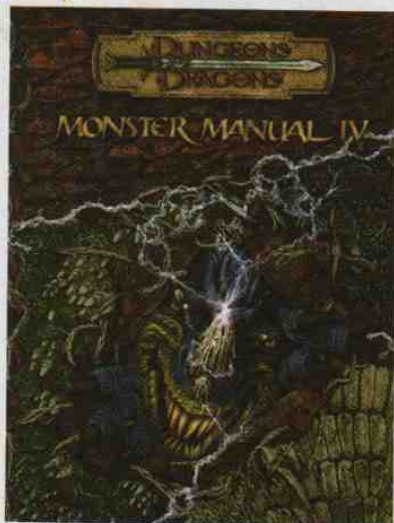


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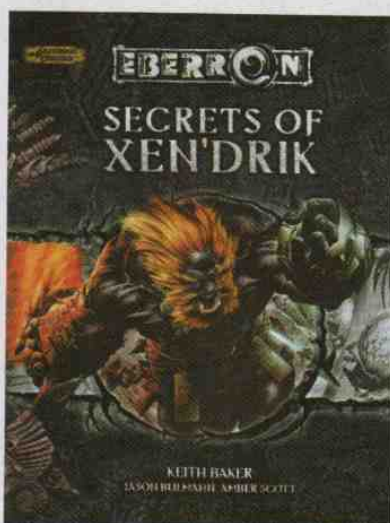
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NEW RELEASES



Who doesn't need more monsters? This month, author Gwendolyn F.M. Kestrel unleashes more than a hundred new butchers and beasts with *Monster Manual IV*. Not just a typical catalog of creatures, each entry presents a wealth of details: spell strategies, new lore for Knowledge checks, sample encounters, and more. Many of these terrors also already have figures for use in *D&D Miniatures*, like the fearsome spawn of Tiamat loosed with the new *War of the Dragon Queen* set. *Monster Manual IV* also includes numerous full-page maps, such as wilderness lairs, grand tombs, and subterranean mining camps.



Explore *EBERRON*'s dark continent with *Secrets of Xen'drik*. Investigating unexplored jungles and fallen civilizations, *EBERRON* creator Keith Baker, along with Jason Bulmahn and Amber E. Scott, reveal the secrets of one of D&D's deadliest frontiers. Discover the true origins of the warforged race along with the ancient mysteries of a continent warped by magical cataclysm. More than just a travelogue, *Secrets of Xen'drik* reveals new encounter traps, savage monsters from the spell-warped past, insights on exploration usable in any campaign, and tie-ins to *D&D Online: Stormreach*.



Protect the world from what stirs deep within the collapsed caves of Dragon-down Grotto. The fourth in the *Fantastic Locations* series, *Dragon Down Grotto* delves through a number of dragon-haunted locales detailed on two double-sided color maps by artist Jason Engle. Scaled for both D&D and *D&D Miniatures* play, these maps tie directly to a 16-page adventure by Ed Stark, testing players in such locales as the Spawnscale Nursery and the Dragon Graveyard. Complementing several of this month's other releases, *Dragon Down Grotto* utilizes beasts from the new *Monster Manual IV* and *War of the Dragon Queen* set of D&D Minis.

NEXT MONTH IN DRAGON #346

**Core Beliefs: Pelor**

by Sean K Reynolds

Bring Pelor's healing light to the darkest reaches of your campaign with this in depth look at the god of the sun.

Impiltur: The Forgotten Kingdom

by George Krashos

No kingdom sleeps quietly in the FORGOTTEN REALMS. Learn what heroism shaped this country's war-ravaged past, what plots threaten its current tenuous peace, and who guards its uncertain future.

Three Dragon Readings

by Craig Shackleton

Cast the fate of your character with this innovative system using the *Three Dragon Ante* deck.

Games of Chance

by Seth Irvin Williams

New card and dice games for you and your character.

Plus!

The Ecology of the Rust Monster, Bazaar of the Bizarre, Class Acts, and comics, including *The Order of the Stick*.



Rampaging Owlbear

Lizardfolk Cleric

Basilisk

ENEMY MEANIE MINI FOES

This month, Goodman Games (goodmangames.com) expands their new miniatures line with a horde of metal monstrosities. Complimenting their ENnie Award-nominated *Dungeon Crawl Classics* adventure series and related hero miniatures comes a horde of figures inspired by some of fantasy's most popular and ferocious beasts. This month's debut unleashes the Rampaging Owlbear, Darkmantle, Deadly Fungus, Swarm of Stirges, and several more. Many of these monsters are specifically chosen not just for their recognizability but for their usefulness in past *Dungeon Crawl Classics* modules.

"We're constantly adding new figures," says Goodman Games' owner Joseph Goodman. "I currently have ten sculpts that aren't displayed yet; starting after Gen Con, look for three to four releases every month."

GAMING ON COMMON GROUND

Attempts to bring the tabletop roleplaying experience to the Internet have been mixed, but it seems the future of roleplaying is trending toward the web. Games like *Neverwinter Nights* and *D&D Online: Stormreach* offer a graphical interface, while products like OpenRPG, WebRPG, and ScreenMonkey use less flashy web-based tools to handle dice-rolling, mapping, and the like.

What these products have in common is that they lose some of the trappings of tabletop gaming—including the tabletop itself. One attempt to recover this traditional gaming feel is *Fantasy Grounds* (fantasygrounds.com), which developer Ville Renvall calls a "genuine tabletop simulator" that features bouncing 3D dice, shared "handouts," and a built-in d20 rules reference. The Windows-based *Fantasy Grounds* takes a noble step toward the inevitability of gathering with your friends to roleplay online, but lacks at least two elements present in "real-life" gaming. The first is voice conversation (left out intentionally according to developer Tero Parvinen), which means that gamers looking to talk to one another will need to use a product like Skype, Teamspeak, or Ventrillo. The other missing element? Snacks.



BEHOLD THE DRAGON QUEEN

Behold the legions of the Dragon Queen and despair! The tenth set of *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS* Miniatures releases this month with *War of the Dragon Queen*. Tiamat herself, Queen of the Dragons, leads this draconic assault as one of twelve new Huge-sized minis, creatures of a size not seen since the *Giants of Legend* set in 2004. Among her hordes rampages new monstrosities like the spawn of Tiamat, dragon-imbued minions of the Chromatic Dragon first featured in the super-adventure *Red Hand of Doom* and further detailed in the newly released *Monster Manual IV*. The Dragon Queen's brood aren't the only new terrors unleashed with this set. Serpentine horrors like the Yaun-ti Sorcerer and classic pests like the Stirge—complete with a clear base making it look as though it were flying—also appear. Besides the Stirge, several miniatures make use of new clear and transparent colored plastic, allowing for effects and greater realism than any previous *D&D* Minis set.



Aspect of Tiamat

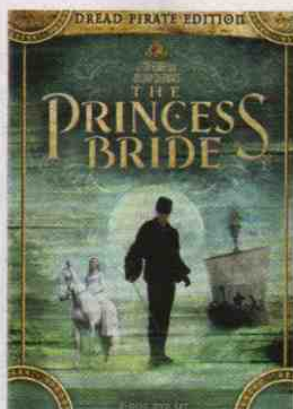
Yaun-ti Sorcerer

Stirge



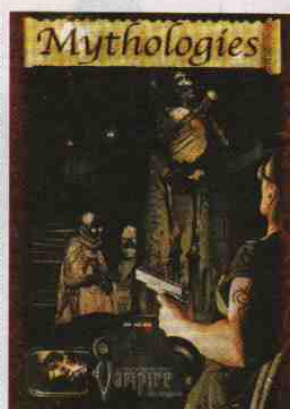
A FOURTH OF DRAGONS

This month, McFarlane Toys (spawn.com) releases their fourth series of dragon figures, *The Fall of the Dragon Kingdom*. This latest line of six mighty monstrosities continues the tradition of its predecessors—highly detailed figures suitable for gaming, collecting, or just showing off. Figures in the set include the two-headed Berserker Clan Dragon, a high-flying Fire Clan dragon (pictured above), and the deluxe Komodo Clan Dragon—a menacing green wyrm perched over his beautiful captive—each including a cataclysmic tale penned by Todd McFarlane.



INCONCEIVABLE!

Newly rereleased on DVD comes one of the definitive works of any gaming movie library, the *Princess Bride*. Getting more than just new packaging, this reissue is available as either the Buttercup Edition or the Dread Pirate Edition. Despite the distinct boxes, both versions of the widescreen feature come with the same extras, including commentary by author William Goldman, the *Dread Pirate Roberts: Legend of the Seven Seas* mockumentary, and the *Fezzik's Guide to Florin* booklet, along with additional featurettes, commentaries, and even a Quotable Battle of Wits Trivia Game.



MYTH-ING LINKS

Everyone knows what vampires are, and what it takes to put one back in the ground, but few know the true origins of these creatures of the night. White Wolf's *Mythologies* fills in the blanks for both players and Storytellers of *Vampire: The Requiem*. Authors Robin D. Laws, Ken Hite, and others reveal an assortment of vampiric legends and rumors, along with the truth of where vampires really came from, what mythical creatures they truly fear, and the nature of the disease that is slowly destroying all of the blood-sucking undead. Learn more online at white-wolf.com.



STEEL YOURSELF

Too big to conveniently transport and easily stained by the wrong kind of marker, the ubiquitous battlemat often proves a graver challenge than the dungeon it depicts. Steel Squire's (steelsquire.com) new Flip-Mats provide an alternative. These laminated 24-inch by 30-inch cardstock mats can be folded up for easy transport, and once deployed can handle dry, wet erase, or permanent markers. You can choose Flip-Mats with blank 1-inch grids, hexs, or one of three typical adventuring scenes, like the Forest Path, illustrated by Jason Engle.

THIS MONTH IN DUNGEON #136



Tensions Rising

by Ryan Smalley

An airship carrying vital secrets has crashed and now the PCs must race a sinister necromancer through a canyon labyrinth to retrieve the information. But the dolgrims that currently live there have other ideas. An *EBERRON* adventure for 4th-level characters.

The Coming Storm

by Greg A. Vaughan

The denizens of a cursed temple that manifests only during powerful storms

are raiding the surrounding lands. What mysterious treasures and hideous dangers await within the Temple of the Incarnate Serpent? A D&D adventure for 10th-level characters.

Gates of Oblivion

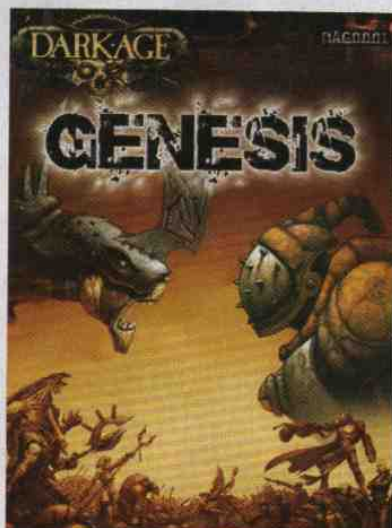
by Alec Austin

When a band of adventurers fails to stop a shadowy ritual, it'll take powerful heroes to prevent the Gates of Oblivion from consuming the Material Plane. A D&D adventure for 18th-level characters.



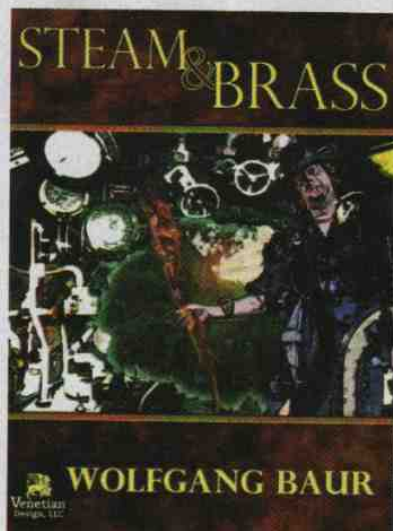
THE 2006 ENNIES

Voting for the sixth annual ENnie awards opens this month. With most nominees determined by a panel of five fan-selected judges, voters determine the past year's best pen-and-paper roleplaying products spanning a variety of categories: Best Rules, Best Writing, Best Cover Art, Best Adventure, and more. As a change from previous years, fans will select Best Publisher by offering online nominations (accepted between June 26th and July 9th). Full voting for each category takes place at enworld.org between July 17th and July 30th, the results of which will be announced in an awards ceremony at Gen Con Indy on August 11th.



AFRAID OF THE DARK AGE?

Abandoned by an interstellar alliance, mauled by mutants, assailed by aliens... life ain't easy for the people of Samaria, the setting for *Dark Age: Genesis*, the miniatures skirmish game from Dark Age Games (dark-age.com). It won't get any easier with this month's release of *Dark Age: Evolution*, adding two new factions to this war-torn wasteland, each mini ready to use in battle or in equally brutal roleplaying. Most notably, from concept sketches to cover art to the metal miniatures themselves, *Dark Age* is rooted in the inimitable artwork of Brom, architect of some of second edition D&D's darkest images.



CUSTOMIZE YOUR ADVENTURES

Act like a Renaissance prince and become a patron of the *Steam & Brass* adventure at the Open Design project (customadventure.livejournal.com). Participants form a small group who direct how veteran game designer and former *DRAGON* editor Wolfgang Baur pulls together the theme, monsters, level, and other details of a complete adventure commissioned through votes and fan feedback. Contributors receive regular online updates, including game design tips and a behind the scenes look at how suggestions mold the adventure. When Wolfgang is done, contributors will also receive a limited electronic edition of the adventure.

RPGA REPORT by Ian Richards



This year sees a sad yet exciting time for the RPGA. It seems strange to talk about things ending when the RPGA is at its largest and most active ever. Ten years ago, Claire and Keith Hoffman spearheaded a group of volunteers that had a dream. They came to the then-RPGA staff with a dream to offer a 10-year gothic horror campaign based on the TSR and now Wizards of the Coast campaign setting, *MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH*. Their plan was to scare D&D horror fans to roleplaying death, and this they did up unto this day! Their rich, roleplaying-intense campaign,

sadly closes its tomb doors this year. Fans of the *LIVING DEATH* Campaign owe a huge debt of gratitude to the thousands of hours of chilling excitement they and their volunteers have given us over that decade. The *LIVING DEATH* Campaign culminates in a special set of adventures planned for Gen Con Indianapolis 2006.

This year also saw the last episode of our *LIVING FORCE* Campaign appear at Winter Fantasy. This, initially under the piloting of Jae Walker and her band of dedicated volunteers, became one of the top four campaigns in the

RPGA universe. This tradition was upheld by Master Jedi August and Cynthia Hahn in the later episodes of the campaign. It's hard to express the thank you these people and their volunteer staff deserve.

I want to extend the RPGA staff's sincere thank you to the Hoffmans, to Jae Walker, and to the Hahns and all our volunteers who help make the RPGA campaigns—past, present, and future—so special and exciting. To those who would like to offer their help we encourage you to contact us on the RPGA website, rpga.com. ☐



DEMONOMICON OF JGGWILY

KOSTCHTCHIE

PRINCE OF WRATH

*"Wrath took her there upon the razored ice,
And left alive enough to bloom his spawn.
He did not for love or lust inflict this pain,
But for valkyrie child born of light and gloom.
Of two worlds she was, and locked within her blood
This hated daughter's death would seed the spire,
And frozen soul would form the ebon lance
To tear a hole from Iron Wastes to fair Ysgard.
Lo Stoldottir!*

*Key to Wrath's incursion of worlds above."
—from the anonymous Northern epic "The Lonely Death of Geirskögul"*

BY JAMES JACOBS • ILLUSTRATED BY ANDREW HOU

Although wrathful Kostchtchie (KOSS-chuh-chee) was not always a demon in body, his anger and hatred marked him as one in soul. As a mortal man, his hatred knew no limits—he was only happy in his anger, and satisfied in his misery. Perhaps the kernel of his hatred lay in his hideous countenance. With twisted limbs and misshapen visage, it seems doubtful that any tribe would welcome him as one of their own. Spurned by women, abandoned by family, all Kostchtchie had to call his own was his anger.

Forced to live at the edge of society, Kostchtchie grew powerful. His return to the tribe that spurned him was marked by ruin. He murdered the young women who had mocked him in youth and established himself as the king by crushing the skull of the current chieftain in his twisted, massive hands. All who rose against him found no limit to the amount of pain and violence his body could absorb, and in the end they all fell to his wrath.

In truth, Kostchtchie encountered something even more foul than he in his years living in the wilderness: Baba Yaga, the old witch of the woods. Kostchtchie's initial reaction to the strange woman was to attack, but when the old witch effortlessly put him down time and time again, he finally stopped to listen to what she had to say. Her reasons for taking an interest in Kostchtchie remain unknown, but what is known is that she gave him a terrible gift—a set of skulls altered to serve as containers. The largest was a frost giant's skull, and within were nested an ogre's skull, a human's skull, a halfling's skull, and finally the skull of a lowly quasit. Within this inner skull hid a potent black diamond, one capable of locking away a mortal soul. By hiding his soul in these interlocking skulls, Kostchtchie's body became invulnerable.

As years grew into decades, Kostchtchie's rule gained the status of legend. His tribe grew vast, yet he seemed not to age. Indeed, with each passing year, his anger seemed to grow, both spiritually and physically. Over time, hideous

Kostchtchie grew to the size of an ogre, and then a giant, and in time his tribe and tales of his murderous rages drew the attention of a powerful celestial paragon named Gwynharwyf. The powerful eladrin led a great army against Kostchtchie, yet her forces were unable to break the immortal barbarian's back. When she discovered the location of Kostchtchie's hidden soul and crushed the gemstone within, his soul returned to his body, carrying with it a dozen lifetimes of rage. He slew his own armies to a man, and in the aftermath was too exhausted to defend himself as Gwynharwyf stood before him and ended his hateful life.

And that is where the tale of a lesser soul would end. Yet Kostchtchie was anything but, and when his hateful soul became lodged in a glacier deep in the Abyss, it began to grow anew.

KOSTCHTCHIE, PRINCE OF WRATH

This bandy-legged, 24-foot-tall giant strides through the banks of blood-stained snow with a thunderous roar. He wields an immense iron maul, his malformed head jutting above his hunched shoulders and bearing a bestial mask of rage.

KOSTCHTCHIE

CR 28

CE Huge outsider (chaotic, cold, evil, extraplanar, tanar'ri)

Init +2; Senses darkvision 60 ft., true seeing; Listen +39, Spot +39

Languages Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Giant; telepathy 300 ft.

AC 46, touch 14, flat-footed 44 (-2 size, +2 Dex, +24 natural, +8 armor, +4 deflection)

hp 615 (30 HD); DR 20/cold iron, epic, and good

Immune cold, critical hits, electricity, poison, sneak attack

Resist acid 10, fire 10; SR 41

Fort +31, Ref +23, Will +27

Weakness vulnerable to fire

Spd 30 ft. in hide armor; 40 ft. base

Melee +3 icy burst truebane cold iron maul +39/+34/+29/+24 (3d8+48/19-20/x3 plus 1d6 cold [plus 2d10 cold on a critical hit])

Ranged rock +30 (2d8+17)

ABOUT THE STATS

This installment of the *Demonomicon* is the first to build directly from the *Fiendish Codex I*. The statistics for the CR 28 version of Kostchtchie's presented here were generated by advancing the demon lord's statistics from the base CR 21 version detailed in that book, with a few additional benefits here and there. If your campaign needs an even tougher Prince of Wrath, you can advance Kostchtchie's statistics even further, either using the method presented in *Fiendish Codex I* or the standard rules for advancing outsiders detailed in the *Monster Manual*.

Although the statistics for Pazuzu, Fraz-Urb'luu, Zugtgtoy, and Baphomet presented in previous installments of this series were built before their base stats were set in *Fiendish Codex I*, you should find that they adhere fairly closely to the advancement rules nonetheless (with the exception of caster level for spell-like abilities—feel free to bump these numbers by a few levels if you wish). After all, these stat blocks served as the baseline when generating their stats for *Fiendish Codex I*.

Space 15 ft.; Reach 15 ft.

Base Atk +30; Grp +50

Atk Options Awesome Blow, Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, stunning blow

Special Atk breath weapon, rage, rock throwing, summon tanar'ri

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 23rd, +30 ranged touch)

At will—astral projection, blasphemy, ice storm, desecrate, detect good, detect law, greater dispel magic, greater teleport, plane shift (Will DC 22), unhallow, unholy aura (Fort DC 25, deflection and resistance bonuses included above), unholy blight (Will DC 21), wind walk
3/day—cone of cold (Ref DC 22), poison (Fort DC 21), symbol of weakness (Fort DC 24)

1/day—harm (Will DC 23), polar ray

*10-point Power Attack

Abilities Str 44, Dex 14, Con 40, Int 20, Wis 22, Cha 25

SQ rock catching, tanar'ri traits

Feats Awesome Blow, Cleave, Dark Speech**, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (maul), Improved Sunder, Improved Toughness (gain +1 hp/HD), Power Attack, Track, Weapon Focus (maul)

Skills Climb +48, Concentration +48, Handle Animal +40, Intimidate +40, Jump +48, Knowledge (nature) +40, Knowledge (the planes) +38, Listen +38, Ride +37, Search +38, Spot +39,

Survival +39 (+41 following tracks), Swim +46

Possessions +5 heavy fortification hide armor, +3 icy burst truebane cold iron maul

**Dark Speech is a feat from *Fiendish Codex I*. If you don't have access to either of these books, replace this feat with Great Cleave.

Breath Weapon (Su) 40 ft. cone, once every minute, 20d10 cold plus 4d6 Dexterity damage, Reflex DC 40 half. A creature reduced to 0 Dexterity by this blast of Abyssal cold is frozen solid. Kostchtchie can shatter (and instantaneously kill) any such creature with a successful blow from his maul. Treat this attack as a coup de grace attack that doesn't provoke an attack of opportunity that can be made as part as any normal attack routine by the Prince of Wrath. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Rage (Ex) Once per day, Kostchtchie can enter a state of frenzy identical to that of a barbarian's greater rage ability. In this state, Kostchtchie's Strength and Constitution increase by +6 and his morale bonus on Will saves increases by +3. His Armor Class takes a -2 penalty. Kostchtchie remains in his rage for 2 minutes and is not fatigued when he leaves his rage. Kostchtchie may enter this state as an immediate action, doing so in response to another creature's action even when it's not his turn. While raging, Kostchtchie's statistics change as follows:

AC 44, touch 12, flat-footed 42

hp 705

Fort +34, Will +30

Melee +3 icy burst truebane cold iron maul +42/+37/+32/+27 (3d8+53/19-20/x3 plus 1d6 cold [plus 2d10 cold on a critical hit])

Ranged rock +30 (2d8+20)

Grp +53

Abilities Str 50, Con 46

Skills Climb +51, Concentration +51, Jump +51, Swim +49

Rock Catching (Ex) Kostchtchie can catch Small, Medium, or Large rocks (or projectiles of similar shape). Once per round, if he would normally be hit by a rock, Kostchtchie can make a Reflex save to catch it as a free action. The DC is 15 for a Small rock, 20 for a Medium one, and 25 for a Large one. (If the projectile provides a magical bonus on attack rolls, the DC increases by that amount). He must be ready and aware of the attack in order to make a rock catching attempt.

Rock Throwing (Ex) Kostchtchie can hurl rocks of 60 to 80 pounds (Medium objects) up to five range increments of 140 feet.

Stunning Blow (Su) Kostchtchie's attacks are particularly powerful. Each time he critically hits an opponent, that opponent is automatically stunned for 1 round unless he makes a DC 42 Fortitude save (DC 45 when Kostchtchie is raging). The save DC is Strength-based.

Summon Tanar'ri (Sp) Once per day, Kostchtchie can automatically summon 2d4 babaus or 1 goristro (see *Fiendish Codex I*). This ability is the equivalent of a 9th-level spell (CL 20th). When encountered, there's a 25% chance Kostchtchie has already utilized this ability to summon tanar'ri simply for the pleasure of attacking and killing them.

Kostchtchie's realm is the 23rd layer of the Abyss, a frozen desert known as the Iron Wastes, which he lords over when not recruiting tribes of frost giants to his hateful cause. His hideous hatred is so intense that even other demons find him unbearable. Most

NEW WEAPON QUALITY

Truebane: The cult of Kostchtchie is generally (if begrudgingly) credited with the development of this more powerful variant of the commonplace *bane* weapon quality. When wielded, a truebane weapon gains the *bane* weapon quality (*Dungeon Master's Guide* 224) against the same type of creature as the wielder. Thus, a giant wielding a truebane weapon gains an additional +2 enhancement bonus on attack rolls and damage and +2d6 additional damage against giants, while a lawful outsider would gain the bonus against other lawful outsiders. At the end of any round in which a truebane weapon deals damage to a creature, the weapon's bane quality changes to match the type of the creature it last damaged; this change persists for 1 round before reverting to the wielder's creature type (unless, of course, the weapon is used to damage a different creature in that round).

Strong conjuration; CL 12th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *rage*, *summon monster I*; Price +3 bonus.

simply ignore the Prince of Wrath, but enough have tried to punish him for his rage that Kostchtchie has recently turned his anger inward—toward the Abyss, to his fellow tanar'ri. It has driven him to make some very dangerous alliances with demons older than the gods themselves.

Although Kostchtchie has many potent spell-like abilities to call upon, in combat he rarely relies upon them. In this regard, his wrath could almost be counted as a disadvantage or weakness, if only his physical attacks were not so devastating. Kostchtchie fights with a tremendous +3 icy burst truebane cold iron maul, and blows from this weapon can knock his enemies senseless. Only when faced by enemies that don't quickly succumb to his ruinous strikes does the Prince of Wrath resort to utilizing magic, and even then he prefers to use attacks like *poison* or *harm* that don't take him out of melee combat. Kostchtchie only flees from combat if reduced below 50 hit points, but whenever he is forced to do so he spends the next several days, weeks, or even years plotting how best to extract revenge against the enemy who forced him to flee.

KOSTCHTCHIE'S ASPECT

Kostchtchie's interests on other planes are generally beneath his immediate concerns unless they directly relate to the subjugation of frost giant tribes. In all other cases,

he allows his aspects to handle the situation—often, he releases an aspect into the multiverse simply to spread pain and anger. Kostchtchie's aspect appears similar to his true form—an immensely powerful giant—although this incarnation of the Prince of Wrath only stands 12 feet tall. His cultists sometimes call upon his aspect with *planar ally* or *planar binding* spells. The stats presented here are representative of the least of Kostchtchie's aspects; other, more powerful incarnations doubtless exist. For more general information on aspects, consult pages 46 and 47 of the *Miniatures Handbook*.

ASPECT OF KOSTCHTCHIE CR 10

CE Large outsider (chaotic, cold, evil, extraplanar, tanar'ri)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +14, Spot +14

Languages Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Giant; telepathy 100 ft.

AC 24, touch 10, flat-footed 23 (–1 size, +1 Dex, +10 natural, +4 armor)

hp 115 (10 HD); DR 5/epic

Immune cold, electricity, poison

Resist acid 10, fire 10

Fort +14, **Ref** +8, **Will** +8

Weakness vulnerable to fire

Spd 30 ft. in hide armor (40 ft. base)

Melee +1 frost maul +14/+9 (2d8+23/x3 plus 1d6 cold)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +10; **Grp** +22

Atk Options Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack, rage 1/day
*5-point Power Attack

Abilities Str 26, Dex 12, Con 24, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 18

Feats Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (maul)

Skills Climb +19, Intimidate +17, Jump +19, Listen +14, Ride +14, Search +15, Sense Motive +14, Spot +14, Survival +14, Swim +17

Possessions +1 hide armor, +1 frost maul

Rage (Ex) Once per day, Kostchtchie's aspect can enter a state of frenzy identical to that of a barbarian's rage ability. In this state, Kostchtchie's Strength and Constitution increase by +4 and his morale bonus on Will saves increases by +2. His Armor Class gains a -2 penalty. Kostchtchie remains in his rage for 2 minutes and is not fatigued when he leaves his rage. While raging, Kostchtchie's statistics change as follows:
AC 22, touch 8, flat-footed 21

hp 135

Fort +16, Will +10

Melee* +1 frost maul +16/+11 (2d8+26/x3 plus 1d6 cold)

Grp +24

Abilities Str 30, Con 28

Skills Climb +21, Jump +21, Swim +19

KOSTCHTCHIE'S GOALS

Above all else, Kostchtchie's primary goal is the utter and complete subjugation of the frost giant race. He has long identified himself with these folk, despite the fact he was born a human man in his mortal life. This remains one of Kostchtchie's sorest points of contention, though, and since his rise to power in the Abyss few have been foolish enough to infer that Kostchtchie was ever once something so frail. In fact, Kostchtchie likes to think of himself as a frost giant rather than a demon, and is quick to punish anyone who speaks otherwise of his nature.

Kostchtchie regularly mounts raids into both the Material Plane and Ysgard, often riding his wyrm white dragon mount Svafnir and leading vast armies of frost giant barbarians and frost mages on savage campaigns against tribes of frost giants in these realms. Kostchtchie mounts these raids primarily to "rescue" his people from their own ignorance and blind servitude to Thrym. When he arrives at a frost giant holding, he gives the tribe a chance to throw down their false idols and to accept him as their lord and god, whereupon he leads them back to the Iron Wastes in the Abyss to join his legions there. Tribes that resist are summarily eradicated. Womenfolk of these tribes meet particularly cruel fates, as Kostchtchie has little patience for them and sees such creatures as fit only for breeding new soldiers for his armies. Females in his armies beyond their child bearing years are typically slain and fed to the tribe's young warriors.

Kostchtchie rarely encounters tribes capable of standing up to his murderous armies, but when he does



he fights until he is the last one standing before fleeing back to his Abyssal domain. Eventually, the Prince of Wrath hopes to build an army of giants large enough that he'll be able to create a second portal in his realm—this one to the plane of Arborea, so he can march his army directly into Gwynharwyf's court and extract revenge from the celestial paragon for the ancient humiliation she visited upon him so long ago.

On the Abyss itself, the Prince of Wrath has two other goals that increasingly consume his attentions. The first of these is the continual expansion of his realm on the Iron Wastes. This region is infinite, with the mountains and glaciers growing ever more rugged and inhospitable the further one travels from the core region the Prince of Wrath has already dominated. He hopes one day to rule the entire layer, a blatant impossibility due to its infinite size, yet not a goal beyond Kostchtchie's boundless ego to lust for.

Kostchtchie's other goal is both more recent and more outlandish than the domination of an infinite realm—he wants to engineer the destruction of the tanar'ri race as a whole. The Prince of Wrath has never seen himself as one of them, and his stewardship over one of the most coveted portals in the Abyss (the Stoldottir Gate, see "Kostchtchie's Realm") had long since been the source of the tanar'ri hatred of him. One recent event in particular has driven Kostchtchie's rage to new heights.

The conflict between the Dark Prince Graz'zt and the Queen of Succubi Malcanthet is one of the most notorious in the Abyss. When Graz'zt hit upon an idea that would not only humiliate Malcanthet but might provide him access to the Stoldottir Gate, he put a dangerous plan into motion. Disguised as the Queen of Succubi, Graz'zt managed over the course of hundreds of clandestine meetings to seduce Kostchtchie and gain his trust, convincing him that, as Malcanthet, he wanted to be Kostchtchie's bride and merge their resources to destroy several other demon lords.

Yet something went wrong. Malcanthet discovered the ruse when one of her lilitu spies (seductive demons with a penchant for corrupting priests, see *Fiendish Codex I*) in Graz'zt's capital city of Zelatar learned that Graz'zt had been spending much time in the Iron Wastes. This spy actually managed to infiltrate one of Graz'zt's personal

harems, but before she could extract any information of his plan he saw through the deception and destroyed her. Yet the damage had been done. Kostchtchie learned of the deception from agents sent by Malcanthet and his rage was so great that he launched an assault on Zelatar. Graz'zt turned the giant army away with ease, but realized nonetheless that his plan had failed and turned to other machinations. His disguise had worked well enough that rumors of a tryst between Malcanthet and Kostchtchie grew in force through the Abyss—although he had failed to gain access to Stoldottir Gate, he had struck a resounding blow against the Queen of Succubi's reputation, and so counted the plan as a partial success.

Yet to Kostchtchie, nothing could have been more humiliating. His realization that he had been manipulated by a woman (even if that woman was actually Graz'zt in disguise) fueled his misogyny like never before, and the fact that the other tanar'ri lords (Graz'zt in particular) now viewed Kostchtchie as a besotted fool triggered one of his greatest rages ever. In the aftermath, fully half of his palace lay in ruins, and from this ruin was born Kostchtchie's most ambitious plan to date.

In the recent years since his humiliation at Graz'zt's six-fingered hands, Kostchtchie has found a dangerous potential ally in this new quest—the ancient demon lord Obox-ob, Prince of Vermin. A monster from a time before the tanar'ri came to the Abyss, Obox-ob was in fact a member of a precursor race of demons known as the obyriths. Once the Prince of Demons himself, Obox-ob had spent countless millennia in hiding on the 663rd player of the Abyss, a nightmare realm called Zionyn. In Obox-ob, Kostchtchie found a kindred spirit, a creature filled with such hatred of the tanar'ri and possessed of such power that his outlandish goal of demonic genocide seemed almost plausible. To date, Kostchtchie's



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attempts to secretly secure an alliance with Obox-ob have failed, either due to the Prince of Wrath's impatience with diplomatic overtures or due to the Prince of Vermin's penchant for eating visitors before giving them a chance to speak. The end result of such an alliance, should it ever come to be, could throw the entire Abyss into turmoil.

KOSTCHTCHIE'S CULT

Kostchtchie's cult consists primarily of tribes of frost giants, although it's not unusual to see tribes of humanoid or ogre barbarians venerating him as well. Worship of Kostchtchie consumes an entire tribe, leaving no room for alternative beliefs—such heretics are rooted out and slaughtered as quickly as they can be discovered. Kostchtchie himself (and by extension his frost giant cultists) tends to view his humanoid and ogre followers as little more than tools or slaves. There's little room for diplomacy or subtlety in the teachings of the Prince of Wrath. His cultists lay claim to vast territories, dominating all neighboring tribes and putting those who don't pledge their souls to Kostchtchie to the axe.

Women have a marginal role in Kostchtchie tribes. His cults are fiercely misogynistic, and on raids, women are typically the first to be murdered. His cult much prefers to abduct young male children from other tribes, perpetuating their numbers through violence rather than reproduction—many tribal cults don't consider themselves "pure" if they count any women among their numbers. Certainly, no females count themselves among his priesthood. To most cultists of Kostchtchie, women serve only one function—as sacrifices to Kostchtchie.

Most sacrificial rituals to Kostchtchie follow a similar theme. The woman to be sacrificed is generally dressed in ceremonial armor and weapons to make her resemble any local women of power in neighboring tribes or cities. In the cases where there are no such targets, his cultists usually dress the sacrifice in revealing robes and ritual leather armor, strap ceremonial scimitars into her hands, and dye her hair silver, creating an image of Gwynharwyf in effigy. Once the sacrifice is prepared, the doomed woman is brought to a pair of stone menhirs located at the edge of the tribe's compound. She is chained between these pylons by the wrists and ankles, after which she is allowed to languish, exposed to the elements. Usually, a cleric casts *endure elements* upon her to prevent her death from frostbite, but this is not always the case.

Once the appropriate amount of time has passed, the cult leader approaches the woman and gives her an opportunity to accept Kostchtchie into her heart. Those who do so are immediately executed with any large, heavy, bludgeoning weapon, and their spirits are shunted directly to the Iron Wastes, where they become lodged in fields of glaciers and ice. These spirits are left to languish in eternal torment—when the Prince of Wrath does visit them, it is only to mock and torment them further.

Those who refuse Kostchtchie's "mercy" can look forward to a much more horrifying end. Tribal cults of Kostchtchie are always located near the lair of some great and dangerous monster; typically this is an advanced fiendish remorhaz, a frost wyrm, or a white dragon. When the sacrifice refuses mercy, the high priest summons the monster (usually in a mundane manner, as with a huge drum or gong, but sometimes using spells like *sending*). The creature arrives within minutes, tears the sacrifice loose, and returns with the woman to its lair to eat or torment her. Of course, once death claims the sacrifice in this event, her spirit remains free and is not damned to the Abyss—the reward for these



strong souls is passage into the afterlife. The loss of these souls annoys Kostchtchie, but he takes solace in the knowledge that their ends were particularly painful and gruesome.

Clerics of Kostchtchie have access to the domains of Chaos and Evil. They also have access to the Winter domain (detailed in *Frostburn*) and the Fury domain (detailed in *Fiendish Codex I*). If you don't use one of these books in your campaign, replace the Winter domain with the War domain, and the Fury domain with the Strength domain. Kostchtchie's favored weapon is the warhammer (or maul, if you use *Complete Warrior* in your game). His symbol is a hammer rimed in bloody ice.

THRALL OF KOSTCHTCHIE

Thralls of Kostchtchie are savage and cruel barbarians who have excised from their minds all emotions save for fury and rage. The leader of a tribe dedicated to Kostchtchie is almost always one of his thralls, yet not all of his thralls are leaders. A fair amount of them are loners who aren't associated with a particular tribe. A thrall might be a human barbarian who has fallen under the Prince of Wrath's sway, or an ogre who discovered an ancient shrine to Kostchtchie in the mountains. These lone thralls serve as proxies on the Material Plane, often drawing small groups of monsters or bandits to their side to aid them in raids on more peaceful groups.

The majority of Kostchtchie's thralls are barbarians. Multiclassed thralls are relatively common, especially barbarian/fighters and barbarian/rangers. Spellcasters tend not to become thralls, since the class not only stalls their spellcasting advancement but the thrall's most potent weapon, the barbarian rage, prevents spellcasting. Nevertheless, a rare few spellcasters with the capacity to cast *rage* sometimes take levels in this class, in which case they use spells almost exclusively to prepare for or recover from combat—spellcasting thralls

of Kostchtchie find casting spells in combat to be a waste of time.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a thrall of Kostchtchie, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria:

Alignment: Chaotic evil

Gender: Male

Skills: Intimidate 9 ranks, Knowledge (religion) 4 ranks.

Feats: Power Attack, Thrall to Demon (Kostchtchie), Weapon Focus (any bludgeoning weapon).

Special: Ability to rage as a class ability, racial ability, or by being able to cast *rage*.

Special: Must seek out a male frost giant and convince him to convert to the worship of Kostchtchie, or must kill no fewer than ten frost giants who refuse to convert.

CLASS FEATURES

The following are class features of the thrall of Kostchtchie prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Thralls of Kostchtchie gain no additional proficiency with weapons or armor.

Disfigured (Ex): When a creature becomes a thrall of Kostchtchie, his appearance twists and deforms. He becomes hideously ugly to look upon. The thrall forevermore takes a penalty equal to his class level on Diplomacy, Disguise, and Gather Information checks, but he gains an equal bonus on all Intimidate checks. The saving throw DCs for any fear effects he creates increase by 2.

Ability Increases: As a thrall of Kostchtchie gains levels, his Strength and Constitution scores improve as he grows larger and more muscular. These are ability score increases exactly like those gained every four levels, and stack with all other modifiers.

Rage (Ex): At 2nd level, a thrall of Kostchtchie gains the ability to rage as a barbarian once per day. At 5th level, he may rage twice per day, and at 8th level, he may do so three times a day. If he gains the rage ability from

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THRALL TO DEMON [VILE]

You supplicate yourself to a demon prince in return for a small measure of power.

Benefit: Once per day, while performing an evil act, you may call upon your demonic patron to add a +1 luck bonus on any one roll.

Special: Once you take this feat, you may not take it again; you may not be a thrall to more than one demon. Nor may you take the Disciple of Darkness feat (a similar feat that binds you to an archdevil). This feat first appeared in *Book of Vile Darkness*.

Base					
Class	Attack	Fort	Ref	Will	
Level	Bonus	Save	Save	Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	Disfigured, +2 Str
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	Rage 1/day, resist cold 10
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	Wrathful rage
4th	+4	+4	+1	+1	Thick skin, +2 Str
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	Rage 2/day, resist cold 20
6th	+6	+5	+2	+2	Unfettered anger, +2 Con
7th	+7	+5	+2	+2	Fiendish rage
8th	+8	+6	+2	+2	Rage 3/day, resist cold 30, +2 Str
9th	+9	+6	+3	+3	Summon hound of Kostchtchie
10th	+10	+7	+3	+3	Wrathful apotheosis, +2 Str, +2 Con

Skills (2 + Int per level): Climb (Str), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Listen (Wis), Ride (Dex), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str)

HIT DIE: d12

another class, these rages stack with those gained from the other class, and can be modified by class abilities like greater rage and tireless rage.

Resist Cold (Ex): At 2nd level, the thrall gains cold resistance 10. This increases by 10 points at 5th level and by another 10 points at 8th level.

Wrathful Rage (Ex): At 3rd level, a thrall of Kostchtchie can select a favored enemy whenever he enters a rage. Use the list of choices available to the ranger when making your selection. Against creatures of his favored enemy type, the thrall of Kostchtchie gains a +4 bonus on weapon damage rolls.

Thick Skin (Ex): At 4th level, the thrall's disfigurement increases to incorporate thickened skin. This improves the thrall's natural armor bonus by 2.

Unfettered Anger (Ex): At 6th level, the thrall becomes immune to the effects of the *calm emotions* spell. While in a rage, he is immune to charm

effects and gains a +4 bonus on saving throws against compulsion effects.

Fiendish Rage (Su): At 7th level, a thrall of Kostchtchie gains the fiendish creature template whenever he rages.

Summon Hound of Kostchtchie (Sp): At 9th level, a thrall of Kostchtchie can summon one of the Prince of Wrath's leucrotta hounds to serve him for 10 rounds in combat. Summoning the hound is a full-round action, and when it arrives, it follows the thrall's spoken commands. If no commands are given, it instinctively attacks the thrall's enemies. This ability can be used once per day.

Wrathful Apotheosis (Su): When a thrall of Kostchtchie reaches 10th level, his body undergoes a terrific transformation. His size increases one category as he grows larger and more muscular. This increase does not impart any changes to the thrall's ability scores (since these changes are in fact spread out during the course

of the thrall's class levels), but his new size category does impact his Armor Class and attack rolls as appropriate. His natural armor bonus increases by +2, and his space and reach increase to match his new size category. The thrall of Kostchtchie gains the cold subtype when he undergoes his wrathful apotheosis. If the thrall was originally a humanoid or monstrous humanoid, his type changes to giant.

KOSTCHTCHIE'S MINIONS

Kostchtchie's favored minions are, of course, frost giants. He actually fancies himself a paragon of the frost giant race, despite technically being an outsider. Few are brave enough to challenge him on his claims. His frost giant minions range wildly, from hulking barbarians to sinister shamans. Perhaps the most feared of his giant minions, though, are the frost mages. These spellcasting giants are not only the myth-makers and story-keepers of Kostchtchie's cult, but they also serve as his diplomats. Of course, diplomacy for a minion of Kostchtchie generally amounts to *charm* and *dominate* spells used to secure the unwavering loyalty of lesser kings and princes. The typical frost mage is a frost giant bard 5/frost mage 7 (the frost mage prestige class is detailed on page 59 of *Frostburn*).

Frost giant minions who excel at spreading Kostchtchie's agenda on the Material Plane can look forward to attracting the Prince of Wrath's attention. In this event, Kostchtchie sends his aspect (or even an *astral projection* of his true form) to observe the giants and evaluate their skill at murder and conversion. If they please him, he offers them a place in the Iron Wastes, a shortcut to the afterlife that bypasses the painful stages of death and becoming a petitioner. If they fail to please him, Kostchtchie slays them all in a fit of rage.

On the Iron Wastes, Kostchtchie's frost giant armies are vast and

seemingly without end. These armies dwell in countless caverns and mountaintop citadels, yet there remains plenty of wilderness for more dangerous creatures to inhabit. All manner of cold-climate monsters dwell in Kostchtchie's realm, including immense fiendish frost worms, advanced remorhazes, white dragons, and worse. Kostchtchie himself maintains a close friendship (perhaps his only friendship) with a great white wyrm named Svafnir. This friendship is all the more curious in that Svafnir is a female dragon—it seems likely Kostchtchie's misogyny isn't all-inclusive.

Kostchtchie is also quite fond of a large group of dangerous and legendary fiendish leucrotta. These monsters' capacity for cruelty and their penchant for tormenting prey simply for the thrill of torment please the Prince of Wrath, who sees a bit of his own temperment in the vicious killers. These immense monsters are quite common in his

glacial citadel, where they serve the Prince of Wrath as guardians, hunters, and pets in much the same way great mastiffs serve human kings. He even refers to these monsters as his hounds. These legendary fiendish leucrotta are nearly three times the size of their lesser Material Plane counterparts, measuring nearly 30 feet in length. Kostchtchie enjoys tossing these monsters pieces of his victims still clad in fragments of their armor, as their adamantite teeth crunch through metal and bone with satisfying snaps.

HOUD OF KOSTCHTCHIE

Fiendish legendary advanced leucrotta
CE Huge outsider (cold, extraplanar)
City of Splendors: Waterdeep 136, *Monster Manual* 107, *Monster Manual II* 213
Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; **Listen** +1, **Spot** +22
Languages Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Giant
AC 25, **touch** 12, **flat-footed** 21 (–2 size,

+4 Dex, +13 natural)
hp 279 (18 HD); **fast healing** 5; **DR** 10/magic
Immune charm, cold, compulsion
Resist fire 10; **SR** 23
Fort +24 (+28 against disease and poison), **Ref** +18, **Will** +10
Weakness vulnerable to fire
Spd 50 ft., **climb** 20 ft.
Melee bite +22 (3d6+20/19–20/x3 plus poison)
Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Base Atk +18; **Grp** +36
Atk Options Improved Bull Rush, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, smite good 1/day (+18 damage)
***5-point Power Attack**
Abilities Str 30, Dex 18, Con 30, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 9
SQ adamantite bite, iron guts, mimicry, sure footed
Feats Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Armor (2), Improved Natural Attack (bite), Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Track, Weapon Focus (bite)

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Skills Bluff +1 (+9 mimicking voices), Climb +18, Hide +4 (+8 in mountainous terrain), Jump +39, Move Silently +25, Spot +22, Survival +22

Adamantine Bite (Ex) A hound of Kostchtchie deals bite damage as if its teeth were magic adamantine weapons both for purposes of bypassing the hardness of objects and for overcoming damage reduction. On a critical hit, a hound of Kostchtchie's bite deals triple damage.

Iron Guts (Ex) A hound of Kostchtchie has a +4 racial bonus on Fortitude saves against disease and poison.

Mimicry (Ex) A hound of Kostchtchie has the ability to mimic animal cries and voices in any language. It can duplicate the voices of its victims, including screams, with uncanny accuracy. A hound of Kostchtchie has a +8 racial bonus on Bluff checks made to imitate another's voice, and it uses its Wisdom modifier (instead of Charisma) when making Bluff and Disguise checks.

Poison (Ex) Injury, Fortitude DC 29, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Strength. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Sure-Footed (Ex) A hound of Kostchtchie has a +4 racial bonus on Balance checks, and it ignores movement penalties for moving on slopes. However, a hound of Kostchtchie lacks hands, and thus cannot climb ropes or vertical walls.

KOSTCHTCHIE'S REALM

The Iron Wastes were not always under the control of Kostchtchie, but in the centuries the Prince of Wrath has ruled this frozen realm they have certainly prospered. The central region of what was once an inhospitable region of jagged glaciers and towering mountains is now, after a fashion, almost civilized compared to many other Abyssal layers. Of course, this consists of legions of wrathful frost giants—only in the Abyss could such a place seem civilized. Vast roads cut into the mountains, built to ease the transport of Kostchtchie's armies and provide creatures without flight a fairly easy method of travel, yet



these roads are also the most heavily patrolled region of the Iron Wastes. Those who use them would do well to disguise themselves as frost giants, if possible.

Beyond the central region controlled by the Prince of Wrath, the razor-edged ice mountains and grinding glaciers of the Iron Wastes reign supreme. Although Kostchtchie enjoys exploring these regions and claiming them for his own, he has still, in the hundreds of years he's ruled the Iron Wastes, only explored a fraction of this endless expanse of inhospitable terrain.

Although the Iron Wastes are the 23rd layer of the Abyss, they are somewhat surprisingly free of tanar'ri presence. This is primarily due to Kostchtchie's intolerance of other demons, and partially due to the inhospitable nature of the frozen realm. It's not

uncommon to encounter small groups of demons here, but for the most part such bands are lost or hiding from even more perilous situations. Kostchtchie often goes on long hunting trips between campaigns to seek out these pockets of tanar'ri, bringing along Svafnir, a half dozen of his hounds, and a small platoon of frost giant fighters more as witnesses than for support. The main exception to this rule are the mysterious mavawhan demons (see the end of this section for details on these monsters).

A number of key locations exist in the Iron Wastes. Two of the most important and one of the most obscure are detailed below.

The Glacier Citadel: Kostchtchie's palace is carved from an immense glacier that flows between two great peaks near the core of the

Iron Wastes. The Prince of Wrath's masons and architects, skilled giants all, must constantly rebuild sections of this fortress as portions of it crumble away, sometimes due to the glacier's constant but imperceptible motion, but more often due to one of Kostchtchie's rages. These tremendous tantrums often leave large sections of his citadel in ruins. The central section that houses Kostchtchie's personal quarters seems strangely stable, with the rest of the glacier flowing around it. The halls of the Glacier Citadel are patrolled by the hounds of Kostchtchie, and his favorite frost mages tend to his needs and keep him apprised of the attempts by his enemies to claim control of Stoldottir Gate.

Stoldottir Gate: Perhaps the most important part of the Iron Wastes, Stoldottir Gate is now generally recognized as the "center" of this infinite realm. Kostchtchie came to the Iron Wastes ages ago, but it wasn't until he created this gate that he bent the Abyssal layer to his will and made it his own. This gate is a stable portal to Ysgard, created when Kostchtchie sacrificed his own (and only) deformed daughter on the spot, the product of his rage and an unfortunate valkyrie named Geirskögul. Their daughter, a creature of both Ysgard and the Abyss, held within her existence the bridge necessary to forge such a gate. Kostchtchie was certain to make her torment last for years in front of her broken, insane mother's eyes—Geirskögul's despair was as important a factor to the portal's longevity as anything else. When his daughter died, the portal became one of the few permanent links between the Abyss and another plane.

Veshvoriak's Rift: This immense rift in the side of a mountain of black ice lies hundreds of miles from the core area dominated by Kostchtchie, deep in the wilds of the Iron Wastes. Kostchtchie discovered this rift fairly recently, at about

the time Graz'zt began his secret seduction of the Prince of Wrath in Malcanthet's guise. Kostchtchie was intrigued by the inky depths of the twenty-mile-long canyon, and after sending a dozen scouting parties into its depths finally decided to brave its secrets on his own.

What he found in the depths of the rift was an immense body, nearly six-hundred feet long, of a long-dead but frozen creature. Kostchtchie could feel the echoes of the immense dead demon's utterly alien mind, and it was only his indomitable will that prevented him from succumbing to its whispers and going mad. His scouts had not been so lucky; they turned on each other and tore themselves limb from limb. The memories of the dead creature flooded Kostchtchie's mind, and he learned this monster was a creature from a time that predated the tanar'ri, a creature that had once ruled an Abyssal layer of its own but had been murdered by another of its kind and hurled into the Iron Wastes like an immense mountain of garbage. This creature was an obyrith lord named Veshvoriak.

Since then, Kostchtchie has found himself drawn to this rift in those times when destruction simply wouldn't do to soothe his mind. He found that turning himself over to the dead obyrith's memories actually calmed his spirit in ways nothing before had. It was through these memories that Kostchtchie learned of Obox-ob, and of late the braver of his minions whisper among themselves of the strange and terrifying calm that seems to be growing in their master's twisted heart. Kostchtchie's wrath has long been his greatest tool, yet it has also been his curse—his temper often intrudes at the wrong time, causing him as much trouble as aid. What if his wrath were to fade? What if Kostchtchie were able to focus his will entire? As Kostchtchie continues to visit the site, who knows what strange and terrible effect these

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poisoned memories might have upon the Prince of Wrath and what terrible new demon might arise from this unholy union?

MAVAWHAN

This strange humanoid creature seems to have a body carved of bloody ice. Its batlike wings are partially transparent and loom behind it, the edges caked with razor-sharp icicles. Its body is muscular yet lean, with pale blue and white skin covered with jagged black runes. Its face is elongated, with a large fanged mouth, four snakelike eyes in a single row, no nose, and long down-curving horns of transparent ice. It has a black mane of hair that tumbles back from its head and down in numerous braids fixed with silver bangles and tiny bones. The creature's arms are long, folding up like the arms of a praying mantis, and its long tail ends in a jagged mess of six icicle-like blades.

MAVAWHAN

CR 9

Always CE Medium outsider (chaotic, cold, evil, extraplanar, tanar'ri)

Init +7; Senses blindsense 30 ft., darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +14, Spot +14

Aura cold

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Draconic; telepathy 100 ft.

AC 24, touch 13, flat-footed 21 (+3 Dex, +11 natural); 50% miss chance

hp 115 (10 HD); DR 10/good

Immune cold, electricity, poison

Resist acid 10, fire 10; SR 17

Fort +14, Ref +10, Will +8

Weakness fire

Spd 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (average); icewalking

Melee 2 claws +16 (1d6+6 plus 1d6 cold) and gore +14 (1d8+3 plus 1d6 cold) and sting +14 (2d4+3 plus 1d6 cold plus freezing)

Base Atk +10; Grp +16

Special Actions *summon tanar'ri*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th)

At will—chill metal (Will DC 15), fog cloud, greater teleport, telekinesis (Will DC 20), wall of ice
3/day—cone of cold (Ref DC 18), ice storm, polar ray

Abilities Str 23, Dex 16, Con 24, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 17

Feats Combat Reflexes, Hover, Improved Initiative, Multiattack

Skills Balance +5, Diplomacy +5, Hide +16, Intimidate +16, Jump +8, Knowledge (any one) +15, Listen +14, Move Silently +16, Search +15, Sense Motive +14, Spot +14, Survival +14, Tumble +16

Environment any cold (The Abyss)

Organization solitary, pair, or flight (3–6)

Treasure standard

Advancement 11–16 HD (Medium), 17–30 HD (Large)

Cold Aura (Su) A mavawhan exudes a bitter aura of cold. All creatures within 30 feet of a mavawhan suffer a –2 penalty when making saving throws against cold effects. In addition, a mavawhan's mere touch deals additional cold damage.

Freezing (Su) A creature damaged by a mavawhan's sting attack is injected with a terrible fluid that quickly freezes the victim from the inside out. The

victim must make a DC 22 Fortitude save each round to resist taking 1d6 points of cold damage and 1 point of Dexterity damage from this creeping freezing liquid. This freezing continues for 5 rounds before it ends. Any magical fire damage applied to the victim immediately ceases the damage as well, but resistance to poison or disease offers no protection against this supernatural attack. The effects of multiple stings are cumulative. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Icwalking (Ex) A mavawhan can move across icy surfaces with complete ease. It can even move across vertical or inverted icy surfaces, as if under the effects of *spider climb* (although the mavawhan moves at its normal speed when doing so).

Summon Tanar'ri (Sp) Once per day, a mavawhan can attempt to summon 1d4 babaus or one mavawhan with a 50% chance of success. This ability is the equivalent of a 4th-level spell.

Known to some as ice demons, these gaunt tanar'ri have dwelt on the Iron



Wastes for ages, certainly longer than Kostchtchie has been the ruler of the realm. Once, vast flocks of mavawhan ruled the skies above and the ice caverns below the Iron Wastes, but Kostchtchie and his minions hunted many of these flocks to extinction. Only the canniest and toughest survived. Today, the mavawhan dwell exclusively on the fringes of the Iron Wastes, avoiding Kostchtchie and his hunters. It's likely that larger concentrations of them live in the most remote regions of this layer, for rumors hold of an immense hollow mountain where the mavawhan overlords roost and plot the reclamation of their ancestral lands. Many of Kostchtchie's enemies have taken to seeking out and hiring mavawhans as spies, scouts, and advisors, since their vast knowledge of the Iron Wastes and their comfort in dwelling there make them ideal for the job. For their part, the mavawhans welcome any aid from beyond the borders of

KOSTCHTCHIE IN THE REAL WORLD

Kostchtchie's first appearance in D&D, as with so many demon lords, was via the old first edition adventure, *Lost Caverns of Tsojcanth*. And like so many of D&D's demon lords, Kostchtchie has his roots in real-world myth.

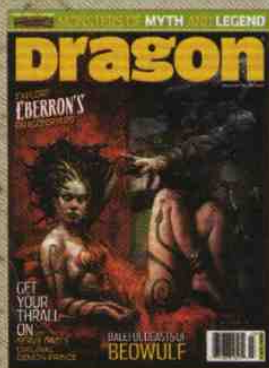
Kostchtchie's genesis comes from Russian myth, where he is known as Koschei the Deathless (although the exact spelling of his name varies widely). Here, Koschei is a horrifically ugly person who enjoys menacing young women. In order to cheat death, Koschei hides his soul inside a cunning container crafted of multiple layers. His soul is hidden inside a needle, which is in an egg inside a duck hidden in a hare locked in an iron chest that is buried under a tree on a remote island. The closer one gets to the needle, the more power one has over Koschei, and the more sickly he grows. Only by recovering the needle and breaking it can this hateful monster be slain. In other myths, Kostchtchie is in fact the name of a hideous race of goblins who dwell in the mountains of Caucasus, where they lust after young maidens. He appears in various other tales, almost always taking the role of a hateful or lustful old man.

the Iron Wastes, as distasteful as it might be to admit they need help in wresting back control of the frozen realm.

A mavawhan prefers to ambush its prey, lying in wait and then hedging victims in with walls of ice and fog clouds before using its area effect cold

attacks to blanket the region. Against creatures that avoid these ambushes, a mavawhan generally engages in melee, relishing the chance to freeze its foes to death. Mavawhan bravery falters against foes immune to cold and they generally break off combat with these targets if possible. ☐

DISCOVER THE SECRETS OF THE DEMONOMICON



329

Pazuzu, Prince of the Lower Aerial Kingdoms, leads his flock in an eternal quest to corrupt the souls of mortals everywhere.



333

Fraz-Urb'luu, Prince of Deception, is free from his prison and has only one thing on his mind; revenge against humanity.



337

Zuggtmoy, Queen of Fungi, festers in the abyss, seeking to spread her corruption across the planes.

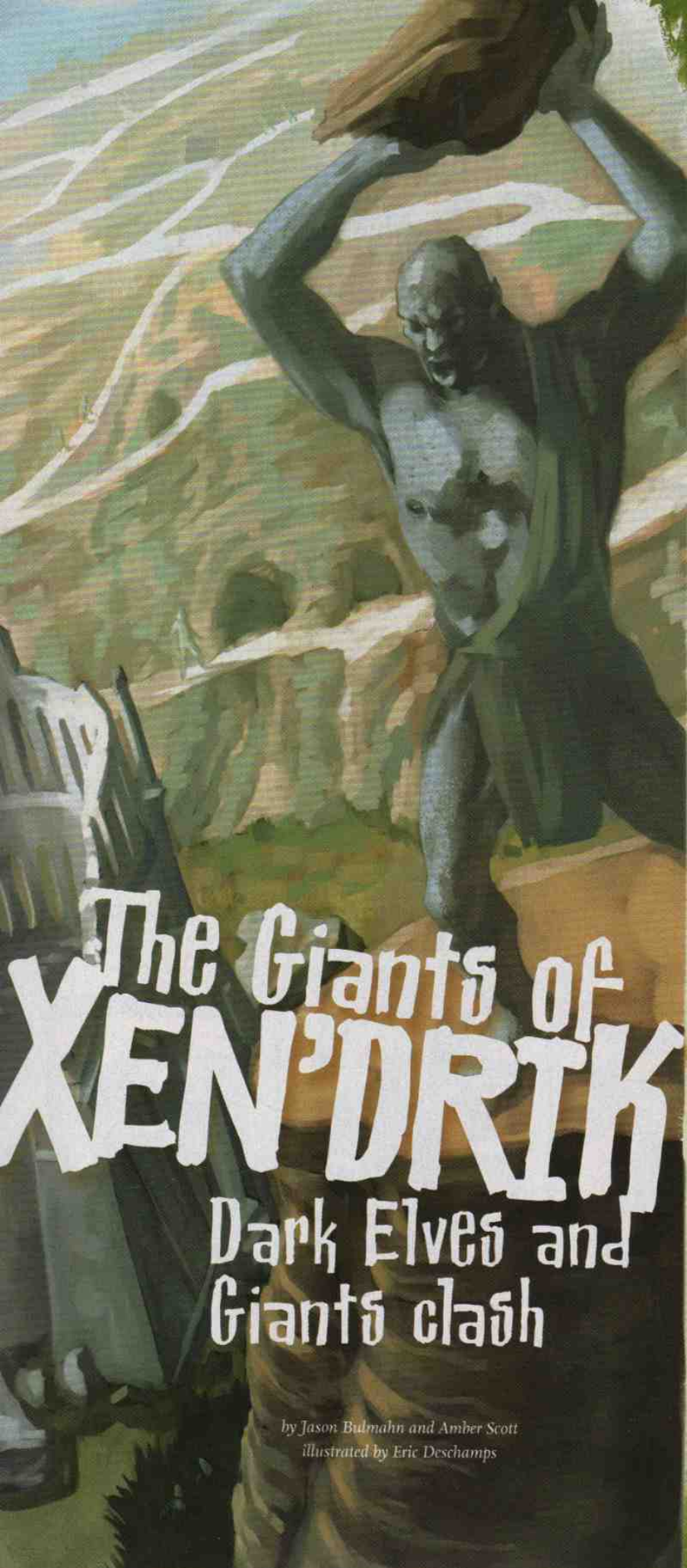


341

Baphomet, Prince of Beasts, lures the unwary into his endless maze only to devour them, mind, body, and soul.

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The Giants of XEN'DRIK

Dark Elves and Giants clash

by Jason Bulmahn and Amber Scott
illustrated by Eric Deschamps

EBERRON is a world of conflict, and nowhere is this more evident than in the unexplored reaches of Xen'drik, where giants and drow fight for the remains of a shattered empire. The drow view this continent as their inheritance, wages for the centuries spent under the thumb of oppressive rulers. The giants, meanwhile, have descended into savagery, with only dreams and whispers to remind them of the greatness they once possessed.

The newly released sourcebook, *Secrets of Xen'drik*, goes into great detail describing both the giants and the drow of this mysterious continent, giving a Dungeon Master most of the pieces he needs to bring these warring parties to life. This article gives an example of how to tie these groups together into a cohesive story, rich with intrigue and adventure. Presented here is a pair of tribes, locked in a struggle of domination and survival. Either could be used individually, to fill out a needed role in any adventure, or together as a separate story that typifies the struggle that rages across the mysterious continent of Xen'drik.

TOL GORUM TRIBE

What few oral legends remain among the giants speak reverently of the Tol Gorum—or Stone Lords—as masters of the earth itself, able to crack it asunder with mighty magic and soothe it with a simple word. These same legends describe the Tol Gorum as a wise and benevolent tribe, whose wisdom solved many disputes and whose vows of peace never faltered. History, it seems, was not as kind to the Tol Gorum's descendants.

Since the fall of the giant empire in a hail of dragon fire, the Tol Gorum have descended into barbarism, forgetting their noble past while simply struggling to survive in a world that rebelled against them. Not long after the collapse, the council that ruled the Tol Gorum disintegrated into petty infighting after losing half its members during the attacks. Individual councilors retreated to their tribes to fortify and regroup.

Vurgatt



While nearly all of these groups have disappeared over the years, one tribe still lives in its ancestral home around a single shattered stone tower, in the actual shadow of its ancestors' glory.

In the years since the collapse, this group, which still calls itself the Tol Gorum, has been a part of countless conflicts that brought them to the brink of annihilation. These trials have forced the stone giants into a primitive life based on survival alone. Few among their number even bother to explore the tower or attempt to learn about their sad history from its crumbling walls. Vurgatt, the leader of the tribe, discourages such education as a threat to his authority and a waste of time. In his view, the only worthy activities are fighting and the production of more stone giants. What Vurgatt does not know is that one of his tribe, a young stone giant boy by the name of Pollog, is a primordial giant, with some of the powers of his ancestors. Nor does Vurgatt know that Pollog's exploration of the ancient tower ruins has shown the boy the ways of the past.

LEADERS OF THE TOL GORUM

Although there are many voices in Tol Gorum, no two carry more weight than those of Vurgatt and Pollog. While Vurgatt's is shouted from the throne of leadership, Pollog's is whispered in the darkness for the receptive to hear.

Vurgatt: Ascending to the mantle of leader soon after the death of his father, Drogann, Vurgatt has spent every day since planning and plotting to punish those who killed the former chief: the accursed drow. When Vurgatt was still a young warrior, his father and a number of other giants went out on a hunting party and encountered a host of dark elves. After crushing many of them and giving chase to the rest, Vurgatt's father simply disappeared and has never been seen again. A shaman later confirmed that he was indeed dead. Vurgatt assumed leadership of the clan within days. Although he does not speak of it, his dreams are haunted by visions of his father and of his bones, which were not permitted their proper rest. Vurgatt is sure the elves who committed the

vile act are somewhere nearby and he will stop at nothing, not even the death of his kin, to find them. In the years since, Vurgatt has killed dozens of drow and burned their bodies, hoping that one more dead elf might appease his father's restless spirit.

Vurgatt is particularly well built, even for a stone giant, and heavily scarred. Many of the scars are of his own device, personal symbols to remind him of his blood-sworn oath of vengeance. The snarling stone giant is never found without *Shatterspike*, his father's +2 *thundering greatclub* (see the *Shatterspike* sidebar). It was the only possession found by those searching for the missing chieftain.

VURGATT

CR 13

Male stone giant barbarian 5

CE Large giant (earth)

Init +2; **Senses** Darkvision 60 ft.; Spot +0, Listen +0

Languages Common, Elven, Giant

AC 25, touch 11, flat-footed 23; improved uncanny dodge

hp 228 (19 HD)

Fort +21, **Ref** +8, **Will** +6

Spd 40 ft. (8 squares)

Melee +2 *thundering greatclub* +26/+21/+16 (2d8+17 plus 1d6 cold) or 2 slams +24 (1d4+10)

Ranged rock +16 (2d8+15)

Base Atk +15; **Grp** +29

Atk Options Combat Reflexes, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Sunder, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, rage 2/day

Special Actions Earthquake Stomp*, rock catching

Combat Gear *potion of haste*, 2 *potions of cure serious wounds* (CL 15th)

Abilities Str 31, Dex 15, Con 24, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 13

SQ fast movement, illiteracy, rock catching, trap sense +1

Feats Combat Reflexes, Earthquake Stomp*, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Sunder, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot

Skills Climb +23, Hide +5 (+13 in rocky terrain), Intimidate +14, Jump +27, Spot +13

In Your Campaign

A Dungeon Master running an Eberron campaign should have little trouble adapting this content to fit nearly anywhere in the vast reaches of Xen'drik. Without *Secrets of Xen'drik*, some of the references made in this article must be replaced, and suggestions are made where possible to ease these changes.

Dungeon Masters running campaigns set in other worlds will find these tribes can easily be dropped into any untamed reach. The drow, for example might work perfectly well as an offshoot tribe living in the forests of Cormanthor in the FORGOTTEN REALMS, while the giants might find a home with their brethren in Geoff for campaigns set in GREYHAWK.

Possessions combat gear plus +2

medium fortification hide armor, cloak of resistance +1, ring of feather fall, giant bag containing 1d4 Xen'drik art objects* in addition to normal giant bag items

* See *Secrets of Xen'drik*

Pollog (male primitive* 10 HD stone giant): Born during a shower of falling dragon shards, Pollog has spent his entire life in wonder and awe of the world around him. Unlike others of his age (which are few these days), Pollog cared not only about honing his body, but his mind as well. He quickly learned many of the old tongues and written languages. While others practiced stone throwing, Pollog studied the barely visible runes found inside the Stone Lord's Tower, and what he saw there astounded him. While Vurgatt was leading many of his people on deadly and largely fruitless raids against the drow, Pollog spent his youth learning about his people's noble past as peaceful and wise giants, both respected and revered.

Now a young adult, Pollog has made it his personal mission to change his society. He has started this undertaking by talking to fellow tribesmen about the old ways, at first as tales, and now as urgings

toward a better way of life. He has kept this mostly hidden from Vurgatt. While it has not yet come to blows, Pollog suspects that when the barbarian leader finds out about his ideas that conflict may prove inevitable.

Although Vurgatt has not forbidden anyone from entering the Stone Lord's Tower, he does keep an eye on those who do, fearful of the knowledge inside. For this reason, Pollog tries to limit his visits to the tower to only when Vurgatt is away on a raid. Little does he know that Vurgatt's spies keep him informed of Pollog's expeditions.

*Primitive is a template found in *Secrets of Xen'drik*. If you do not have this book, change Pollog to an elder stone giant.

PEOPLE OF TOL GORUM

The giants of Tol Gorum

fall into one of two groups.

The larger of these, by far, are those who support Vurgatt and his ideas of vengeance. The people thought highly of Vurgatt's father and his disappearance caused a great deal of anguish and anger. Vurgatt capitalized on this and uses it as a reminder whenever his plans meet resistance. The other group believes in what Pollog has to say and quietly supports him in his attempts to steer the people toward a more peaceful and civilized lifestyle. This movement has little chance to succeed while Vurgatt lives, so many who follow Pollog do so secretly and oppose Vurgatt only when it cannot be traced back to them.

Most of the males of Tol Gorum spend their days patrolling the settlement and stockpiling weapons for the next raid. When not on duty, they loaf about and eat, allowing their women to serve them. The women, on the other hand, are usually quite busy gathering food, rearing children, making crude fabric out of local plant fibers, and tending to the group's loyal sloth of six dire bears. Children are expected to help

their mothers, but when a male reaches adolescence, he begins to accompany his father and learn how to fight.

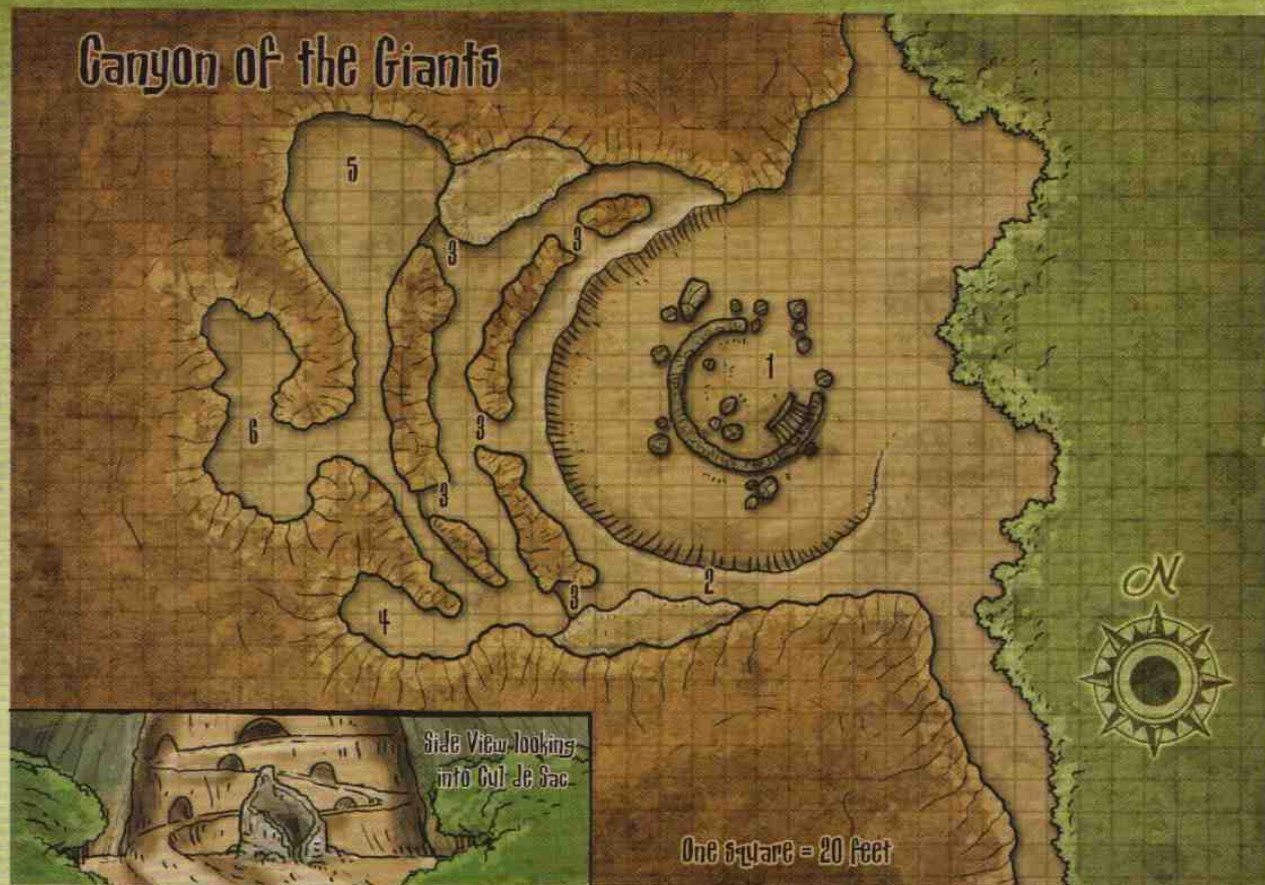
There is generally little organization to the settlement's activity. Patrols are irregular at best, except when drow are spotted nearby. Then the settlement becomes quite busy, with giants preparing for a raid and keeping close watch for any signs of ambush or trickery. A typical patrol consists of a trio of stone giants, one of whom handles a dire bear that accompanies the patrol.

Every evening, a larger fire is built inside the Storm Lord's Tower, casting shifting shadows across the cliff walls of the settlement. It is during these times that the warriors of the tribe gather about for contests of rock throwing and wrestling. Vurgatt almost always wins these matches, primarily because the others are afraid of his wrath should he lose. More than one giant has been severely beaten after



Pollog

Canyon of the Giants



defeating Vurgatt in a rock throwing challenge. Once the fire in the Storm Lord's Tower dies down, the warriors usually stumble back to their caves to sleep off the strong wine and bellies full of roasted boar.

The entire tribe of Tol Gorum consists of the following:

Stone Giants (32): hp 119 each; *Monster Manual* 124. Of these, only 12 are male. The females do not fight unless their children are threatened.

Stone Giant Ranger 2 (2): hp 136 each.

Stone Giant Rogue 3: hp 141.

Stone Giant Sorcerer 4: hp 145.

Stone Giant Children (14): hp 46 each.

Dire Bear (6): hp 105 each; *Monster Manual* 63.

CANYON OF THE TOL GORUM

The Tol Gorum giants reside in a stone canyon set into a great plinth of rock deep within the jungle. This place has been the home of their people for ages and they all fight to the bitter end to protect it.

1. Tower of the Stone Lords: Standing in the middle of a sheltering cul-de-sac, the shattered Tower of the Stone Lords

Shatterspike

Crafted by the ancient elders of the Tol Gorum during the fall of their civilization, *Shatterspike* is a deadly weapon capable of savagely destroying foes. In the hands of a desperate wielder, this club can rend the earth itself.

Description: This Large greatclub is made from a single piece of weathered gray stone, engraved with bands of earth symbols around the base. Up near the head of the club, a carving depicts stone giants tearing the ground asunder.

Activation: Swinging *shatterspike* is sufficient to activate its basic properties. Activating the *shatter* or *earthquake* effect is a standard action.

Effect: *Shatterspike* functions as a Large +2 *thundering greatclub*. In addition, the wielder of *shatterspike* can use the weapon to cast *shatter* three times per day (CL 12th, DC 13). The most powerful effect of the club, however, requires the sacrifice of its wielder, draining his life to power the magic. Built to be the ultimate weapon, *shatterspike* can cast *earthquake* (CL 15th, DC 22), but doing so causes the death of the wielder. This function can only be activated with the full intent of its wielder and no amount of trickery or control can force this sacrifice. This ability can be used no more than once per month. Drogann used this ability while hunting the drow, thinking, in his hubris, that he might survive.

Aura/Caster Level: Strong evocation; CL 15th.

Construction: Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *blindness/deafness*, *earthquake*, *shatter*, 17,905 gp, 1,408 XP, 36 days.

Weight: 12 lb.

Price: 35,505 gp.

Giant-Tooth Arrow

The drow take teeth from their fallen enemies to craft these blunt-tipped arrows. Szazar, the drow chieftain, made his arrows from teeth of the sacred skulls. Designed to help them combat giants, the drow do not hesitate to fire these arrows at any intruder, giant or not, who enters their vale.

Description: This black-shafted arrow possesses a wedge-shaped ivory tip. Dark red sinew binds the arrowhead to the shaft.

Activation: Firing a *giant-tooth arrow* is sufficient to activate its magic properties.

Effect: A *giant-tooth arrow* functions as a +2 *giant bane arrow*. In addition, whenever the arrow deals damage to a target, the arrowhead burrows beneath the target's flesh. The target receives a -2 penalty on attack rolls, Reflex saves, and Concentration checks while the arrow remains lodged in her flesh. The target can take a standard action to remove the arrow. The burrowing property does not affect constructs, oozes, or undead.

Aura/Caster Level: Moderate conjuration and necromancy; CL 9th.

Construction: Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *bestow curse*, *summon monster I*, 327 gp, 26 XP, 1 day.

Weight: —

Price: 647 gp per arrow.

is the center to the Tol Gorum community. Although few currently understand its significance, all of the stone giants of Tol Gorum treat the battered tower with respect. Inside the outer shell are crumbling stone stairs, mounds of rubble, and dozens of worn and faded wall carvings. These might make an ideal place to find an artifact spell (see page 76) or a map fragment of the ancient giant empire.

2. The Winding Path: This wide stone path winds up the canyon wall, ending in the great meeting place (area 6). Large piles of boulders are positioned all along this path to give the giants ample ammunition during a drow raid or other attack. When the majority of the clan is resting, a pair of guards wanders

this path from top to bottom, keeping a lookout for attack.

3. Clan Caves: All of the stone giants of the Tol Gorum live in these caves, many of which span multiple chambers deep within the rock. As communal living spaces, these caves are richly decorated in furs, carvings, and ample stone furniture. Some of these carvings are thousands of years old and hold little meaning to the current occupants, but their beauty and expert craftsmanship has kept them intact. Personal belongings are stored in sacks the giants move with them from cave to cave.

4. Bear Cave: Dire bears and the clan's shaman (who tends them) occupy this cave. The bears are usually only active as a group when Vurgatt is preparing for a raid. Most other times, individual bears are either here, on patrol, or out with the shaman hunting for food.

5. Stone Throne: Vurgatt's father, Drogann, held court in this great open space at the top of the winding path. Although not a true court, the great stone seat served as a place where the leaders of the Tol Gorum announced important decisions and heard the words of their fellow tribesmen. Today, Vurgatt uses the space only when gathering the people to announce his upcoming attacks and to mete out punishment to those who displease him. On more than one occasion, the angry stone giant leader has tossed one of his kin from the ledge onto the rocks below. While not usually deadly, this punishment is akin to banishment.

6. Vurgatt's Cave: This large cave is the home to Vurgatt, the leader of the Tol Gorum. Aside from an occasional concubine, Vurgatt is the only resident of these two caves. Finely decorated with plush furs, stone furniture, and various war trophies, Vurgatt's lair contains a pile of drow skulls—each charred black by fire—on top of his table in the center of the room. Behind the leader's bed is a large rock hiding a tiny niche. This is where Vurgatt keeps anything he considers dangerous to the tribe, such as strange carvings from the tower that show elves and giants working together and an ancient metal spellbook,

complete with images of peaceful stone giants using their magic for good. These pieces of contraband frighten Vurgatt, as they would certainly fuel the fires of Pollog's insolence.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

The following adventure seeds allow you to use the Tol Gorum in your campaign alone or in conjunction with the Drow of the Vale.

Ancient Map: The PCs come in possession of a rubbing depicting a map that speaks of great treasure, but it is unfortunately incomplete. Another explorer, once having been a captive of the Tol Gorum, recognizes the map as one that resides in their tower. He is certain the complete map can be found there, if only the PCs can find a way in without angering the giants.

Pollog's Help: The PCs encounter Pollog on one of their journeys through the jungle. After speaking with him, the characters learn of his plight. Pollog asks them to help him bring peace back to his clan. He has heard rumors that Vurgatt is hiding other clues to the past in his cave and asks the PCs to sneak in and recover them.

THE DROW OF THE SACRED VALE

Only a handful of scholars know the drow clan name Cynaxis. All others refer to the clan as the drow of the Sacred Vale. Abundant legends tell of this Sacred Vale; some say it contains a river of gold, others claim the drow worship a skull carved from an enormous diamond. Most believe the spirits of the drow's ancestors guard the vale and turn trespassers into hideous undead monstrosities.

Like most legends, these stories contain grains of truth and much fabrication. Years ago, a band of drow skirmished with a tribe of stone giants. Many drow died at giant hands, and the survivors fled into the jungle, pursued by the warrior-leader of the stone giants and two of his strongest hunters. The drow felt certain their end had come, but when all seemed lost, the ground trembled and a tremendous maw rent

the earth. The nimble drow leapt to safety, but the giants fell into the chasm to dash their heads on the rocks below.

The drow survivors declared the earthquake a sign, and that the giants' grave would thereafter be sacred. The drow settled in the chasm after hauling the giant corpses out. The leader of the drow ordered the giants decapitated and their heads boiled. He stacked the three skulls in the center of the chasm, declaring it a holy site.

The earthquake had opened an underground stream and fresh water ran from a tiny spring at the narrow end of the canyon. The drow set about constructing huts and deepening niches in the walls to use as abodes. Over the years, vines and plants grew down the sides of the dale, and trees shot up from the ground. Today, the chasm is a deep, shadowed vale, hidden from view by overhanging jungle canopy and guarded fiercely by the drow inhabitants. The spirits of drow ancestors don't guard the

Sacred Vale, but the current aquasa (chieftain) claims to be guided by the restless spirit of his father.

LEADERS OF THE SACRED VALE

Two individuals guide the drow tribe in different ways. The aquasa, Sszaral, inflames his people with fiery words and the unflagging energy of a zealot. The shaman, I'qualyn, tempers the aquasa's energy with her methodical, ruthless plotting.

Sszaral: It was Sszaral's father, Kestral, who led his people in the near-fatal raid against the stone giants, only to be saved by the shaking of the earth. Sszaral was Kestral's only son and lived his life in the shadow of his legacy. A small and sickly child, Sszaral keenly felt his father's expectations for him and pushed himself further than he should have in an effort to live up to those expectations. He became a lean, savage, devoted champion of the clan. When Kestral died at the hands of the Tol Gorum, Sszaral became aquasa and swore he would bring his

father's body back for proper burial by the sacred skulls.

Sszaral led a raid against the Tol Gorum but found the stone giants had burned Kestral's body to ash. Maddened by this disrespect and shamed by his failure, Sszaral has made it his life's mission to destroy the Tol Gorum, hoping their extinction will appease his father's spirit. Sszaral believes that Kestral's spirit guides him, whispering plans into his ear and demanding vengeance in dreams. The more mundane truth lies with the clan's shaman, I'qualyn.

Sszaral is a thin, angular drow with large, haunted eyes and a fanatic's grin. A large scorpion-shaped birthmark on his back denotes his status as blessed of Vulkoor, the drow scorpion god. He wields a deadly scorpion chain* and fights fearlessly, although he does retreat rather than risk death.

*The drow scorpion chain is a weapon found in *Secrets of Xen'drik*. If you do not have this book, change the weapon to a spiked chain.

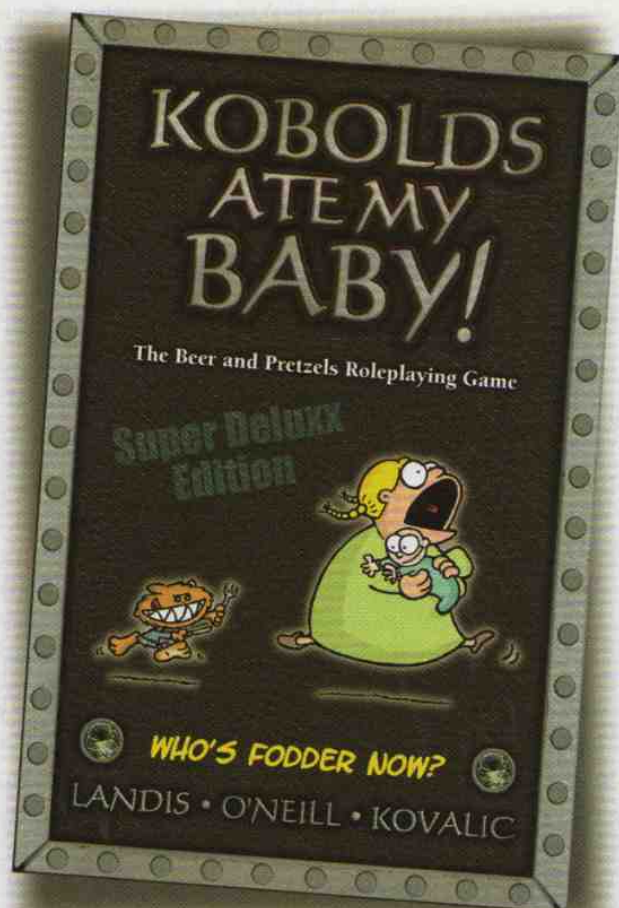
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NEW FEAT

The following feat is common among the drow of the Sacred Vale.

STING STRIKE [Racial]

You strike with the deadly precision and speed of a scorpion.

Prerequisites: Drow, Drow Skirmisher*, base attack bonus +6, region of origin Xen'drik.

Benefit: When using the full attack action to make multiple attacks with a drow long knife, drow scorpion chain, or Xen'drik boomerang, you gain a +1 bonus on your second attack, a +2 bonus on your third attack, and so on. You need not direct all your attacks against the same target, but you must use the full-attack action, and thus cannot move more than a 5-foot step in the round.

Special: You cannot combine Sting Strike with feats that modify the number of attacks you get, such as Rapid Shot or Whirlwind Attack.

*This feat appears in *Secrets of Xen'drik*. If you do not possess that book, substitute Exotic Weapon Proficiency (kukri, spiked chain, or Xen'drik boomerang).

SSZARAL

CR 13

Male drow ranger 10/scorpion wraith* 2
CE Medium humanoid (elf)

Init +10; **Senses** Darkvision 120 ft.; Spot +16, Listen +16

Languages Common, Elven

AC 21, touch 16, flat-footed 15; **evasion**

hp 93 (12 HD)

Immune sleep effects

SR 23

Fort +10, **Ref** +16, **Will** +4 (+6 against spells and spell-like abilities); +2 against enchantment

Weakness light blindness

Spd 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee +2 drow scorpion chain of venom +17/+13/+9 (1d6+6/19–20)

Ranged mwk composite longbow +19/+14/+9 (1d8+3/x3) or mwk composite longbow +23/+18/+13 (1d8+7 plus 2d6/x3) (with giant-tooth arrow against a giant opponent)

Base Atk +12; **Grp** +15

Atk Options favored enemy giants +6, favored enemy animals +2, favored

enemy humans +2, Rapid Shot, sudden strike +1d6

Ranger Spells Prepared (CL 5th):

2nd—*barkskin*

1st—*entangle* (DC 12), *longstrider*

Spell-Like Abilities:

2/day—*darkness* (CL 12th, 2/day)

1/day—*acid splash* (CL 1st), *dancing lights* (CL 12th), *detect poison* (CL 1st), *faerie fire* (CL 12th), *pass without trace* (CL 1st)

Combat Gear *potion of cure serious wounds*, *scroll of tree shape*

Abilities Str 16, Dex 23, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 14

Abilities Str 16,

Dex 23, Con 17,

Int 10, Wis 12,

Cha 14

SQ animal

companion (Large monstrous scorpion, *Monster Manual* page 287), drow traits, poison use, swift tracker, unexpected assault, wild empathy, woodland stride

Feats Blessed of Vulkoor**, Blind-Fight, Drow Skirmisher**, Endurance^B, Improved Initiative, Rapid Shot^B, Sting Strike, Track^B

Skills Hide +26, Listen +16, Knowledge (nature) +8, Move Silently +26, Spot +16, Survival +8, Tumble +21

Possessions combat gear plus +3 shadow leather armor of silent moves, gloves of dexterity +2, +2 drow scorpion chain of venom (as dagger of venom), 5 giant-tooth arrows, 2 vials of large scorpion venom, masterwork composite (+3 Str) longbow, 20 arrows

Sudden Strike (Ex): Whenever Sszaral's target is denied its Dexterity bonus to Armor Class (whether the target actually has a Dexterity bonus or not), Sszaral deals an extra 1d6 damage with his attack. Sszaral cannot use sudden strike against opponents he flanks unless the opponent is also denied its Dexterity bonus to AC. This ability otherwise functions as a rogue's sneak attack.

Unexpected Assault (Ex): Sszaral gains a +4 bonus on initiative if he is

allowed to act during a surprise round.

This ability does not apply if combat begins without a surprise round.

Wild Empathy (Ex): Sszaral's ranger and scorpion wraith levels stack for determining his bonus on wild empathy checks. Sszaral treats vermin as magical beasts for purposes of using wild empathy.

*This prestige class can be found in *Secrets of Xen'drik*.

** These feats appear in *Secrets of Xen'drik*. If you do not possess the book, substitute Combat Reflexes and Exotic Weapon Proficiency (spiked chain).

I'qualyn (female drow cleric 7*): Decades ago, I'qualyn harbored plans to become the chieftain Kestral's mate. She craved power over the clan but knew her abrasive personality and scheming ways had garnered little support among the drow. She resolved to seduce the aquasa and bear his child, solidifying her importance to the clan.

Sszaral



I'qualyn's plans failed when Kestral proved resistant to her overtures and her magic. He took another woman as his mate, a woman who died giving birth to Sszaral. I'qualyn was furious but hid her rage. Outwardly she supported Kestral, while inwardly she seethed with resentment over her treatment.

When Kestral died and Sszaral became the new aquasa, I'qualyn saw her chance. Always a fretful, obsessive child, Sszaral was easier to manipulate than his father had been. I'qualyn uses her magic and cunning to convince Sszaral that his father's spirit guides him. She falsifies divinations and auguries, claims to bring messages from the dead to Sszaral, and uses her magic to create signs, such as giant scorpions, to influence clan decisions. I'qualyn hopes these tricks will spur Sszaral into greater and greater acts of bravery against the Tol Gorum giants, ending in Sszaral's messy death. The aquasa has no heirs, and control of the clan would likely pass to the shaman.

*I'qualyn uses the statistics for a drow shaman, found in *Secrets of Xen'drik*.

PEOPLE OF THE SACRED VALE

The drow of the Sacred Vale value preparedness, organization, and training

above all. Sszaral knows that, in a fair fight, the giants would crush his people. The drow use stealth tactics, ambushes, and secrecy to battle the Tol Gorum tribe and stay alive.

All adult drow take shifts scouting around the edge of the vale. As the clan is relatively small, all drow train as warriors from a young age and learn the subtle tactics of their elders.

An average day in the Sacred Vale consists of mundane activities interspersed with defending the vale and participating in important rituals. The clan does not divide labor by gender, save for childcare, which is traditionally handled by females. Infants remain with their mother, while older children play and work together, supervised by one or two drow women. Some drow gather plants from the nearby jungle. While the clan is not strictly agrarian, the drow do cultivate areas of wild growth in the jungle, encouraging greater yields. The clan traps most of its meat, but some drow hunt during the day. Night hunting seems more natural to drow, but most harmless prey is active during the day.

Trapmaking is an integral part of the vale's defense. Drow scouts spend hours each day foraging for trapmaking materials and fashioning nets and snares. The traps bring in

meat for the tribe and scare off (or kill) trespassers. In addition to watching for invaders, drow scouts take note of explorers and well-equipped outfits suitable for raiding. Sszaral believes that fine weaponry gives the clan an edge against the giants; since the drow lack the ability to forge their own weapons, they take them from explorers and adventurers who draw too near the vale.

When not working to ensure the clan's survival, the drow enjoy tribal dances and songs, storytelling in the lodge, and contests of skill, such as dagger throwing or tree climbing. Just before sunrise, I'qualyn leads a ritual of reverence for the past by the sacred skulls. The entire clan attends this ceremony, where they chant softly in remembrance of their kin and pray for strength to defeat their enemies.

The entire clan of the Sacred Vale consists of the following:

Drow Scout*, drow ranger 2 (17): hp 14 each.

Drow Raider*, drow fighter 2/ranger 2 (8): hp 27 each.

Drow Poisoner*, drow rogue 5/assassin 1 (5): hp 23 each.

Drow Firebringer*, drow sorcerer 7 (2): hp 19 each.

Drow Children (12): hp 2 each. *Monster Manual* 102.





Large Monstrous Scorpions (4): hp 32 each. *Monster Manual* 287.

*These stat blocks appear in *Secrets of Xen'drik*.

THE SACRED VALE

Hidden from outsiders, the vale is not only the clan's physical home, but also their spiritual center. Drow enter the world in the vale, live their lives in it, and when they die, find their final rest in the vale's earth.

1. Common Huts. These large huts of intertwined branches possess earthen roofs covered with living plants. This camouflage disguises the huts from casual overhead observation, adding another layer of security to the vale. Each hut houses up to four adult drow and two children. Smaller huts, each housing up to two adult drow, are hidden in small copses of trees within the vale.

2. Group Lodge. Constructed of heavy logs and topped with a living roof, the group lodge serves as a communal meeting place for the clan, as well as a bastion in times of

attack. If enemies invade the vale, the children and any adults unable to fight crowd into the group lodge and bar the heavy door. Intruders attempting to enter the lodge receive a nasty surprise, as the drow cultivate a strain of assassin vine on the lodge roof. The assassin vine (*Monster Manual*, page 20) does not attack drow but strikes at anyone else.

3. Sacred Skulls. Three yellow giant skulls stand in a pyramid in the center of the vale. Brown decay surrounds cracks in the bone. The skulls lack many teeth, giving them gap-toothed grins.

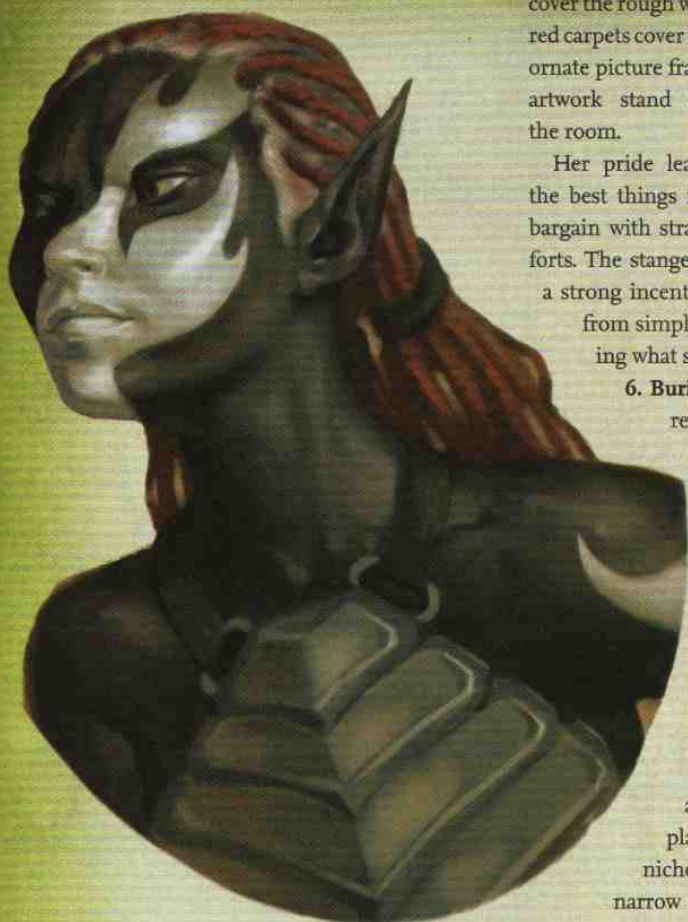
If a giant or a creature with a Wisdom score of 16 or higher comes within 30 feet of the skulls, the individual hears plaintive, restless whispers. The whispers, spoken in giant, call down curses on the drow clan and demand to be restored to their kin for proper burial. I'qualyn hears these whispers, but they only give her pleasure as she contemplates her enemies' trapped and angry spirits.

4. Aquasa's Hut. The largest hut in the vale belongs to the aquasa. Traditionally, the aquasa's family also lives in this hut, but Sszaral has not taken a mate. He lives alone, sleeping on a simple pallet. Sszaral has blocked off most of the hut with hanging curtains; hiding crates, chests, and sacks containing his father's belongings, as well as goods taken during raids and not yet distributed.

Sszaral has never gone through all his father's possessions. Anything could be in those containers, including drow artifacts, magic items taken from explorers, valuables stolen from the giants, or even dragonshard. Interested parties might commission adventurers or explorers to recover these lost items from the drow.

5. Shaman's Hut. I'qualyn lives surrounded by comfort. She enjoys rich textures, soft materials, and attractive art objects, and often recommends raids on groups likely to carry such items. I'qualyn possesses good taste, though, and her hut is aesthetically appealing, not gaudy. Red, orange, and yellow tapestries

I'qualyn



cover the rough wooden walls, and plush red carpets cover the floor. Statuettes and ornate picture frames holding I'qualyn's artwork stand around the edge of the room.

Her pride leads I'qualyn to desire the best things in life, and she might bargain with strangers for added comforts. The strangers would have to offer a strong incentive to prevent I'qualyn from simply killing them and taking what she wants.

6. Burial Grounds. The drow revere their vale, and after death, they return to the vale. The clan carves deep niches in the rock walls at one end. I'qualyn and respected elders wrap drow bodies in linen shrouds dyed deep colors, such as crimson, black, and purple, and then place the bodies in the niches with dried herbs. The narrow end of the vale always

holds the sweet scent of herbs mingled with the foul stench of death.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

The following adventure seeds allow you to use the Drow of the Vale in your campaign alone or in conjunction with the Tol Gorum.

Diamond Skull: Rumor is spreading through Stormreach of a clan of drow who worship a giant skull made from one titanic diamond. Incredible rewards are being offered to anyone who recovers the skull. Fake maps and wild rumors abound about the skull and the reclusive drow who worship it, some say, from the bottom of a hidden valley.

Take Me Home: A dying drow approaches the PCs in search of aid. The drow is an explorer who left the Sacred Vale years ago to see the wider world. Now, having contracted a terrible wasting disease, he hopes the PCs will transport his body back to his home for proper burial. The task is not as easy as it seems, since Szazal declared the explorer an outcast soon after he left to prevent others from leaving. ■

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

There are many routes leading from Stormreach into the interior of Xen'drik and one of the more popular paths leads right through the area between the Vale of the Drow and the Tol Gorum. Soon after explorers and adventurers began traveling through this area, the drow began to raid them for equipment and supplies. Not long thereafter, the giants, having felt the sting of stolen weapons and magic, assumed the drow were in league with the outsiders.

Today, no caravan or traveler is safe passing through this region. The drow raids are growing more frequent and the giants have taken to ambushing travelers in hopes of cutting off supply to the drow. Tavern tales in Stormreach speak of the dangers of this path and numerous adventuring guilds and even a few dragonmarked houses are interested in solving the problem. The PCs are called in to deal with the situation and are sent into the jungle to find the cause of the attacks.

Arriving on the scene, the PCs quickly learn the problem is not as simple as it might seem. The two warring sides have no interest in resolving their differences, and the travelers making their way through the region are caught, literally, in the middle. Although brute force might work

for high-level parties, others must find more diplomatic solutions. Both sides fight out of ignorance, and both sides have meddlesome subordinates who might be used to manipulate the situation. If the PCs manage to befriend or at least ally with I'qualyn, they are able to manipulate Szazal. On the giant side, Pollog could convince his people of a new way, at the urgings of the PCs, and stop the growing violence. If successful, the PCs might be able to get the giants and drow to exchange the captured remains of the old leaders and live in peace. If not, the jungle will not be safe for travelers for some time to come.

If you are using *Secrets of Xen'drik* extensively, a number of locations and plot seeds might prove useful in fleshing out an adventure using these two warring tribes. For locations, consider placing the Fog Lake, Forsaken City, Old Growth Ruins, or Ziggurat Ruins locations between the two camps. In addition, the Primitive Camp location makes for a perfect rest stop for travelers in the area and a natural ambush site for either side. If you are using other adventure seeds from *Secrets of Xen'drik*, either clan might make for perfect enemies in the Illicit Shipment or Lost seed, or as substitutes for the creatures in the Missing Missionaries seed.



Excursion

Four Ways to Travel the World

by Martin Ralya • illustrated by Jeff Carlisle

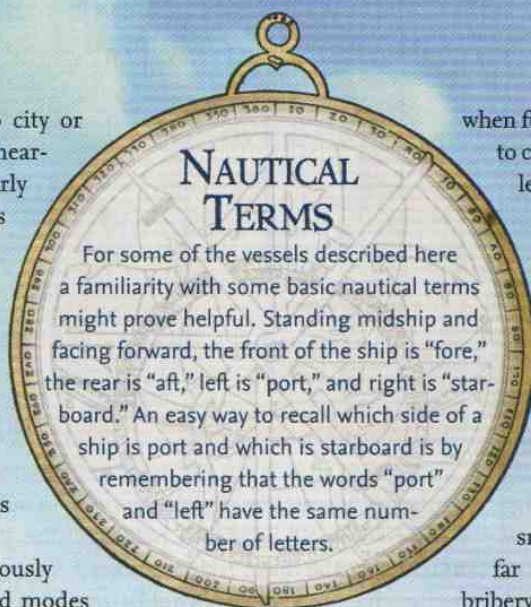
Whether from city to city or from town to the nearest dungeon, nearly every D&D campaign involves travel. Sometimes, though, journeying to the next adventure locale involves more than just a jaunt over the far hill. How a party makes its way through the world often holds overlooked possibilities for adventure and sometimes merely the act of journeying has an excitement all its own.

For the DM, spontaneously inventing detailed vehicles and modes of conveyance besides simple horse-drawn wagons and conveniently welcoming caravans can be difficult. To aid in this common dilemma, presented here are four fantasy conveyances: an oceangoing trader, a land-traveling caravan, a hot air balloon, and a submersible. Any of these four vessels and their captains might be dropped into an ongoing game with little advance preparation. DMs seeking to crew these ships in greater detail might find some of the low-level NPCs from Chapter 4 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* useful.

All four of these forms of travel could also serve as roving "home bases" for an adventuring party. Several plot hooks also provide plenty of ways to spice up a long journey—or make the trek itself an adventure.

THE SILVER TRIDENT

The *Silver Trident* is a three-masted sloop converted from wartime duties for service as a seafaring trader. Capable of transporting 400 tons of cargo, she rides low on the water



when fully laden, but with so much canvas to catch the wind she still makes excellent time when it blows favorably. In addition to her captain, Aressa Mallik, the "Trident" has a crew of 30 sailors.

The Trident has a distinctive silver sheen to her hull and sails, along with an intricate silverwork bow culminating in a figurehead of a merman wielding a silver trident. Her captain is widely believed to be a smuggler—which she is—but thus far a combination of cleverness and bribery has kept her out of trouble.

Main Deck: The sloop's main deck is a wide expanse set with three sturdy masts, in addition to the captain's cabin, stateroom, and two massive trapdoors that open into the ship's cargo hold. Two small, collapsible cranes are commonly stored on deck and can be easily assembled to quickly hoist cargo up from either side of the ship. A crow's nest holding a warning bell and a light crossbow crown the mainmast.

At the aft of the deck sits the luxuriously appointed captain's cabin. Boasting thick brocade curtains, teak furniture, and a four-posted feather bed, the cabin is adjoined by a noble stateroom. As finely furnished as the captain's quarters, the stateroom is lined with map-stuffed bookshelves and dominated by a dining table capable of seating ten. Captain Mallik spends much of her time in these two rooms when she's not prowling the deck.

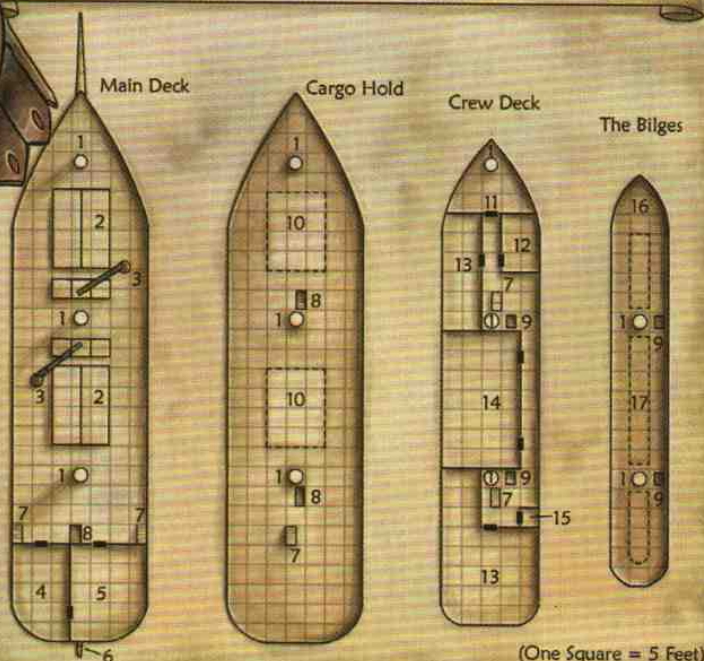
Cargo Hold: The *Silver Trident's* cargo hold is a single open deck, its surface broken only by the three masts as their roots continue down through the ship. The usually



THE SILVER TRIDENT

KEY

- | | | |
|-------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| 1 Mast | 7 Stairs Up | 13 Crew Bunks |
| 2 Cargo Hatch | 8 Stairs Down | (Sleeps 30 Total) |
| 3 Cargo Crane | 9 Bilge Hatch | 14 Mess/Galley |
| 4 Captain's Cabin | 10 Cargo | 15 Head |
| 5 Stateroom | 11 Storage | 16 Bilges |
| 6 Rudder | 12 Guest Cabin | 17 Secret Smuggler's Hold |
| | (Sleeps 4) | ■ = Door |



tightly-packed chamber regularly smells of pungent teas and spices, weapon oil, vegetables, animals, or whatever else the ship's clients have paid to transport. The walls are studded with eyehooks, mounts, and lashing points for securing a wide variety of freight. When the hold is full, cargo is held in place by thick ropes and webs of netting, allowing the crew to wind their way through the stacked crates, bales, barrels, and other items. The Trident never sails empty, so the hold is always packed at least half-full.

Crew Deck: Off-duty crewmen spend much of their time on this deck. At the deck's center rests the *Silver Trident's* galley and mess, which can seat fifteen people at two long trestle tables. A large crew cabin sits at the aft of this deck. Hammocks line the walls and several freestanding bunks cluster at the center of the room. A second, smaller crew cabin sits forward of the galley, along with a storage area for supplies and a cabin for up to four guests or passengers.

Bilges: The bilges, a dark, cramped, and thoroughly unpleasant space that

sloshes with seawater, sits just below the crew deck. While of little note on most ships, the *Silver Trident's* bilges house a hidden smuggler's hold.

Smuggling is a sidelight for Captain Mallik, who makes a very tidy profit with her legitimate trading business. For the right price, though, the Trident smuggles anything that fits in her secret hold. Only Captain Mallik and a few of her most trusted crew members know of this secret compartment, which can accommodate approximately 1,000 pounds of cargo or five fugitives uncomfortably.

The Crew

Along with Captain Mallik, about thirty human and half-elven sailors, with a small minority of halflings and half-orcs, crew the *Silver Trident*.

Captain Aressa Mallik is a sly, jovial woman on land, willing to take

calculated risks and skirt the law in the pursuit of freedom and profit. Her gambler's facade, however, ends as soon as she boards her ship, as she is unwilling to jeopardize her home and the crew that trusts her. A keen judge of character, Captain Mallik has given numerous crew members second chances when no one else would. As such, many are fiercely loyal to her, especially her one-armed half-orc first-mate, Kreeve.

CAPTAIN ARESSA MALLIK CR 7

Female human fighter 2/rogue 5
CG Medium humanoid

Init +5; **Senses** Listen +1, Spot +4

Language Aquan, Common, Orc

AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15; Dodge, uncanny dodge

hp 31 (7 HD)

Fort +5, **Ref** +6, **Will** +7; evasion

Spd 30 ft. (6 squares)

ABOARD THE SILVER TRIDENT

Trade ships risk many perils and their captains often hire adventurers for protection on especially dangerous voyages. Alternatively, if the party needs a colorful way to make an ocean voyage, it might be able to rent a berth aboard the *Silver Trident*, although the cost is largely left up to Captain Mallik's whim. An oceangoing trader might also make an excellent traveling base for the PCs, particularly if a campaign features piracy or exploration.

Foam and Fury: While on the open sea, the *Silver Trident* is attacked by sahuagin. Boarders armed with spears clamber up the hull, others try to scuttle the ship, and the waters below foam with frenzied sharks. At the same moment, something within a large chained crate in the hold begins spraying torrents of water, swamping the ship's lower levels. Can the party beat off the sahuagin and save the ship? And what in the cargo hold seems intent on aiding the sahuagin?

That's No Island: While transporting a hold full of supplies to a secluded island abby, the crew of the *Silver Trident* discovers its destination is nowhere to be found—not just the town, but the entire island! Not willing to lose payment or jeopardize her reputation, Captain Mallik insists on discovering what happened to the isle. The island, however, isn't an island at all, but a freshly awakened giant turtle known as a zaratan (see page 88 of the *Arms and Equipment Guide*).

Melee +1 rapier +7 melee (1d6+2/18–20)

Base Atk +5; **Grp** +6

Combat Gear *potion of haste*

Attack Options Combat Expertise,
Improved Disarm; sneak attack +3d6

Abilities Str 12, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 15,
Wis 13, Cha 14

SQ trap sense +1

Feats Athletic, Combat Expertise,
Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved
Disarm, Improved Initiative

Skills Appraise +6, Balance +8, Bluff
+10, Climb +8, Diplomacy +9,
Forgery +4, Intimidate +10, Jump
+5, Knowledge (geography) +6,
Knowledge (local) +8, Knowledge
(nature) +4, Profession (sailor) +11,
Sense Motive +5, Spot +8, Survival
+4, Swim +9, Use Rope +5

Possessions +1 rapier, mithral shirt, cloak of
resistance +1, ring of protection +1, 30 gp

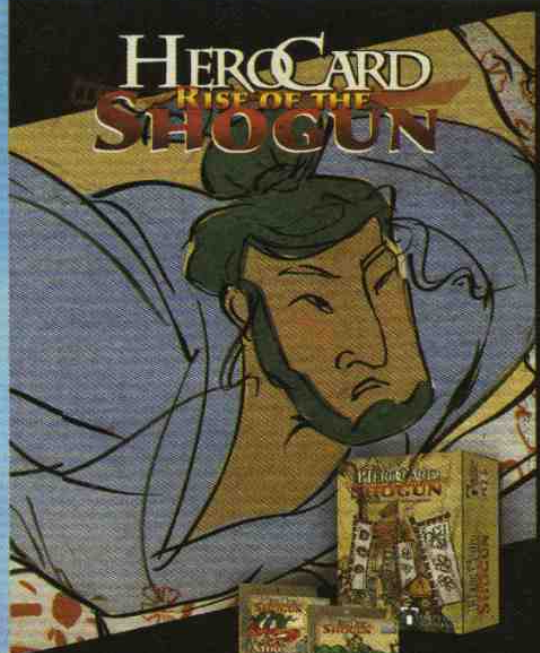
THE KRAKEN'S BANE

The *Kraken's Bane* is a wholly unique vehicle, a 60-foot-long submersible of vaguely ichthyoid shape. Originally constructed for an eccentric wizard who wanted to capture strange undersea creatures and harvest the rare bounty of the aquatic world, the *Kraken's Bane* only has room for twelve Medium creatures and little else. The vessel has a crew of four, led

by the fearsome Captain Zagiir, and few defenses except for its maneuverability and a powerful hull-splintering ram. The *Kraken's Bane* can dive to a depth of 200 meters and is equipped with a magical air recirculation system that allows her to stay submerged for up to three days with a full crew. Three hours topside with her hatch open recharges this system for another three days of continuous use. This ship's unique property makes the *Kraken's Bane* ideally suited for roles as a scout, smuggler, raider, or explorer.

The *Kraken's Bane* has a pale gray-blue hull, four articulated fins, and a pair of red portholes made to look like eyes. Her interior is cramped and claustrophobic, with not an inch of usable space going to waste, although Captain Zagiir and long-time crewmen call the surroundings "cozy."

Forward Observation: When the *Kraken's Bane* is more than a few feet underwater, the two large portholes here provide the only way for those aboard to see what's outside the ship. Two small foldout benches sit just beneath these "eyes," giving anyone standing at the pilot's console—a pedestal with several levers atop it standing in the center of the room—a



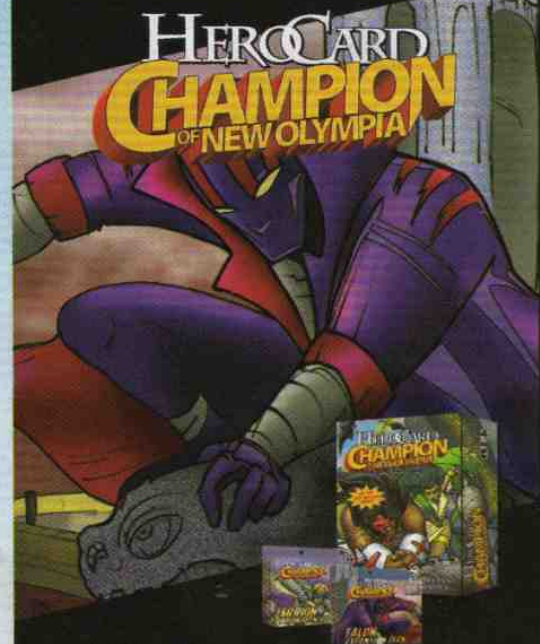
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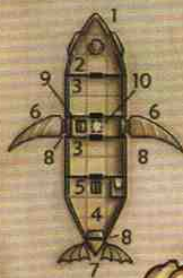
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THE KRAKEN'S BANE

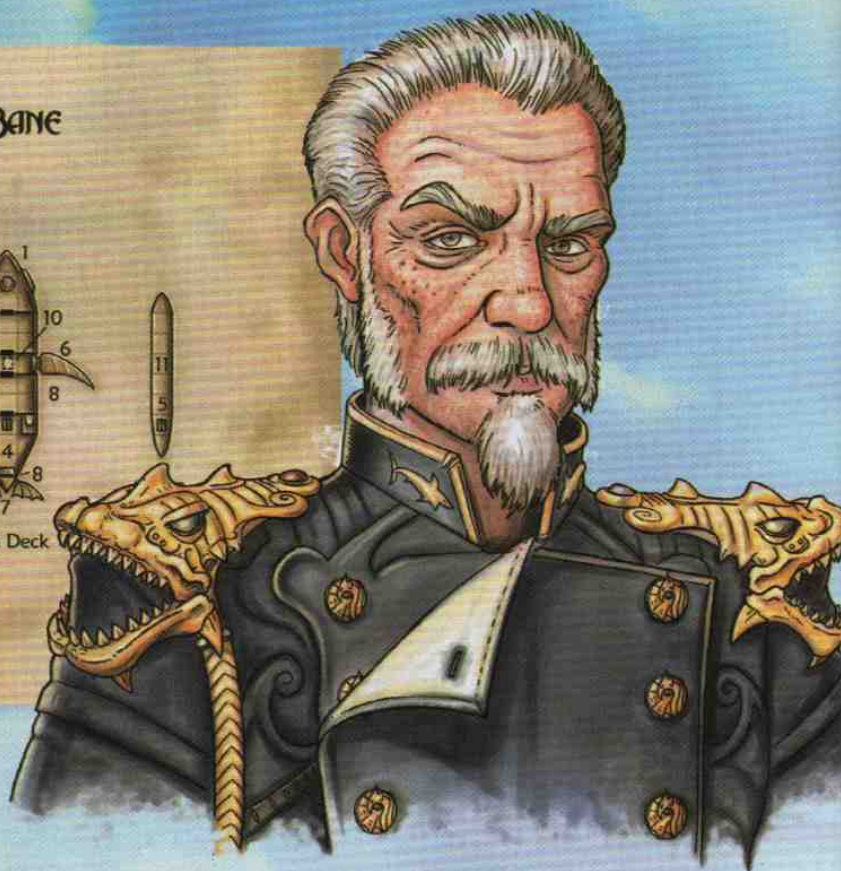
KEY

- 1 Pilot's Console
- 2 Forward Observation
- 3 Bunks (Sleeps 4)
- 4 Planning & Galley
- 5 Hatch
- 6 Fin
- 7 Aft Fins
- 8 Fin Mechanism
- 9 Hatch to Outside
- 10 Periscope
- 11 Cargo Area
- = Door/Hatch

(One Square = 5 Feet)



Main Deck



view of the waters ahead. This console allows the pilot to control the submersible's four fins with a number of magically aided clockwork controls. Captain Zagiir most often acts as pilot. If things require a faster or more precise level of control, such as when the boat is under attack, caught in a strong current, or trying to dive during a storm, other crewmembers can work the fins manually—one crew member on each side fin and the third on the pair of smaller aft fins. Well-used maps also line the walls here, each pinned with a web of strings charting destinations, prevailing sea currents, and known threats.

Periscope: The submersible's elongated dorsal fin houses the boat's periscope, allowing those aboard to observe the surface while underwater. With the *Kraken's Bane* just a few feet underwater, only the tip of the periscope breaks the water. The periscope rotates 360 degrees, allowing anyone manning the ceiling-mounted controls to see in any direction.

Bunks: There are no guest quarters aboard the *Kraken's Bane* and everyone shares two tiny bunk rooms, one fore and one aft. There is little room for personal belongings in these rooms, and even less privacy. The already limited space is exacerbated by the

crew's tendency to give Captain Zagiir the rear bunkroom to himself, as few care to incite his temper.

Planning & Mess: A planning room that doubles as the *Kraken's Bane* mess rests to the submersible's aft. The walls are lined with cabinets and cunningly designed folding tables that can swing into place when it's time for a meal or to provide a flat surface for charts and maps. This room has a homey feel, with scrollwork around the doorway and carvings—some crude, some quite beautiful—covering every inch of the cabinetry.

Cargo Area: Beneath the main deck's floor is the cargo hold—a narrow, tubular chamber just barely tall enough to crawl around in. All of the submersible's food, supplies, and the personal gear of the crew and passengers are kept here, as there's little room on the main deck.

The Crew

The crew of the *Kraken's Bane* is a grim lot, cowed by the formidable shadow of Captain Zagiir. Two new crewmen

and two veterans man the ship with tireless precision, as the captain has no patience for incompetence. The crew willingly tolerates Zagiir's turbulent temper, though, as each is exceptionally well paid. Questions such as where this gold comes from and what happened to the ship's former crewmembers remain unanswered—or at least, anyone in the know proves unwilling to speak of such things.

Captain Zagiir has served as commander of the *Kraken's Bane* since the ship's creation, although he is not the ship's owner. A weathered, lifelong seaman and the only member of the vessel's original crew, Zagiir speaks little of his past, but sometimes alludes to having captained a number of more traditional ships—possibly even as an admiral of a country's naval forces. Why he now captains this single unusual ship for a mysterious patron is a secret he has no patience to answer and he sternly rebuffs any who prove too inquisitive. Used to having his orders followed without question, Zagiir dislikes having "civilians" aboard his

ABOARD THE KRAKEN'S BANE

While Captain Zagiir rarely takes on passengers willingly, dire need and the orders of his patron might cause him to overlook his distaste. If the PCs prove they can serve some particularly useful purpose or somehow garner the favor of the ship's true owner, they might be allowed passage for a single excursion or even a series of missions.

The White Kraken: A powerful, pale kraken has recently begun terrorizing the sea-lanes, destroying ships and razing coastal towns with seemingly little reason. All attempts to repel or kill the beast have failed, with most attacks passing through its body as though it were insubstantial. Upon hearing of the creature, Captain Zagiir determinedly seeks to hire a number of magic users to confront the kraken. He claims he has not only fought the monster before, but in fact slew it nearly 20 years ago.

10,000 Fathoms: The *Kraken's Bane* has been ordered to salvage the cargo of the *Maiden's Light*, a ship that sunk several dozen years ago. Seeking a way to uncover and manipulate the goods, Captain Zagiir hires the party to aid them. In the time since the *Maiden's Light* sunk, however, a terrible sea dragon (see "Sea Serpents" on page 54 of this issue) has taken up lair in the ship and is less than welcoming to interlopers.

ship, although he begrudgingly takes on passengers at the will of his master. Uncompromising and severe, Captain Zagiir runs a tight ship and, despite his age, still proves skilled enough with a blade to oppose any would-be mutineer.

CAPTAIN ZAGIIR

CR 11

Male human fighter 11

CG Medium humanoid

Init -1; Senses Listen +3, Spot +5

Language Common, Dwarven, Elven, Gnome

AC 19, touch 9, flat-footed 19

hp 65 (11 HD)

Fort +11, Ref +2, Will +6

Spd 30 ft. (6 squares)

Melee +2 cutlass +17 melee (1d6+6/19-20)

Base Atk +11; Grp +13

Attack Options Cleave, Combat

Expertise, Power Attack

Abilities Str 14, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 16,

Wis 17, Cha 12

Feats Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Combat

Expertise, Diehard, Endurance, Great

Fortitude, Greater Weapon Focus

(cutlass), Persuasive, Power Attack,

Weapon Focus (cutlass), Weapon

Specialization (cutlass)

Skills Bluff +3, Diplomacy +6,

Intimidate +17, Knowledge

(geography) +9, Knowledge (history)

+8, Profession (sailor) +17, Sense

Motive +8, Spot +7, Swim +12

Possessions +2 cutlass, +2 glimmered splint mail, bracers of armor +2, potion of water breathing (2), 135 gp

SERELLA'S CARAVAN

A staple of many fantasy campaigns, overland caravans provide a convenient means for PCs to travel from place to place while leaving plenty of room for adventures along the road. Caravans are more than just freight wagons, though. Each is its own moving community with drovers, outriders, passengers, merchants, guards, and adventurers. In the case of this specific caravan, all of these members answer to one leader: caravan master Serella Laer.

This caravan consists of a train of fifteen wagons: a watch wagon, ten merchant wagons, the caravan master's wagon, and three guard wagons scattered among them. Each wagon is drawn by two heavy horses and has wide, iron-rimmed wheels built to handle even the toughest roads.

Watch Wagon: All the wagons of the caravan follow the watch wagon. Two drovers make sure the caravan follows the right roads while four guards armed with heavy cross-

bows watch for danger. In inclement weather, a canvas-covered frame open on all four sides can be erected above the open-topped wagon to give the crew some protection.

In addition to an ample supply of bolts, the watch wagon also carries a pair of signal horns. If the lookouts spot trouble, they use these horns to alert the rest of the caravan. Different signals quickly communicate information to the other wagons, such as three blasts to signal a halt or one long blare to warn of an attack or danger.

Guard Wagon: The guard wagons are rolling wooden forts cut with numerous arrow slits. Each wagon holds six caravan guards and a drover. If the caravan is attacked, half the guards leave the wagons and spread out to protect the caravan while the rest offer support fire from within.

Merchant Wagons: Merchant wagons carry a wide variety of different cargos. Generally, these wagons provide their drivers with cover and room for one or two passengers to sleep. Depending on its cargo, a merchant wagon typically takes one of two forms: an open cart, essentially a rolling platform with short sides packed with tied-down cargo, or a wagon supporting a canvas-covered frame, with all of the cargo under cover. If there's enough room left over, these wagons can also transport passengers.

Currently, the ten merchant wagons traveling with the caravan are owned by three different merchants or trading companies: Six wagons are owned by the Seven Coppers Trading Coaster, represented by the pompous and impatient stockholder Reymold Mox and his staff of drovers. Three wagons belong to the Flintsteel Clan and are manned by three of the dwarven family's scions, brothers Irgden, Whard, and Ivlace Flintsteel. The final wagon belongs to an aged tinker, Vai Gerdeminny and his cynical ten-year-old granddaughter, Sei.



Caravan Master's Wagon: This wooden wagon has four permanent walls and a curved roof, and serves as the home of Caravan Master Serella. The interior, a single rolling room, is cluttered with all of her worldly possessions, personal supply stashes, and an eclectic collection of curios picked up throughout her wide travels. Serella is fierce about her privacy and rarely invites anyone into her rolling sanctuary.

Riders and Other Travelers: In addition to the various guards and merchants, the caravan is accompanied by four outriders—each bearing signal horns and crossbows—two cooks, and six hired hands capable of performing any necessary labor. Adventurers hired on as caravan guards are often assigned to accompany the outriders. In addition to the crew, a pair of travelers, siblings Rive and Simone Tanner, also ride with the caravan, although they mostly keep to themselves.

The Crew

A number of different folk are attracted to the life of a drover or other caravan follower. Most are of an independent soul, and few have any



ABOARD SERELLA'S CARAVAN

Joining up with Serella and her caravan is an easy accomplishment. If there's room, anyone wishing to become a passenger pays 5 silver pieces per day of the journey, half in advance and the rest, based on the trip's actual duration, upon reaching the caravan's destination. Additional wagons may also join on, but are charged 1 gold piece per day per horse. Groups wishing to hire on with Serella's caravan must prove they can serve a useful purpose. Every member must prove capable, and if not must pay as passengers. Serella pays 2 sp a day, in addition to providing food, weak ale, and uncomfortable places to sleep.

patience for those who lack the skills to fend for themselves or the gold to pay their ways. Currently, twenty-three guards, sixteen drovers, and four outriders travel along with Serella.

Serella is one of the most experienced caravan masters there is, knowing almost every safe route, dry camp, and shortcut on the road. Naturally suspicious and possessing a no-nonsense outlook, she doesn't take people or coincidences at face value. She constantly watches for potential

betrayal while often plotting her own. The road is often a rough place, and while not a brigand, Serella has no problem conning gullible passersby or fast-talking traders into a better deal. While sharp-tongued, she gradually warms up to those who prove themselves useful and is friendly with, even motherly to, her longtime crew—her "boys." Hundreds of travelers and other caravan masters know Serella and she knows each of them and their quirks and cons in turn.

CAPTAIN SERELLA

Female human rogue 4

N Medium humanoid

Init +2; **Senses** Listen +7, Spot +7

Language Common, Goblin

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13; uncanny
dodge

hp 28 (4 HD)

Fort +4, **Ref** +6, **Will** +3; evasion

Spd 30 ft. (6 squares)

Ranged +1 light crossbow +7 ranged
(1d8+1/19–20)

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +2

Attack Options sneak attack +2d6

Abilities Str 8, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 13,
Wis 15, Cha 12

SQ trap sense +1

Feats Mounted Combat, Mounted
Archery, Weapon Focus (light
crossbow)

Skills Appraise +7, Bluff +8, Diplomacy
+7, Handle Animal +4, Gather
Information +8, Knowledge (geography)
+4, Knowledge (local) +8, Listen +7,
Profession (drover) +9, Ride +5, Sense
Motive +4, Spot +7, Survival +4

Possessions +1 light crossbow, leather
armor, ring of protection +1, 30 bolts

THE STEAMBOLT

The *Steambolt* is a strange contraption: a specially converted ship suspended from a massive hot-air balloon. Built by a crew of dwarves and gnome engineers, the oblong balloon portion is made of magically treated canvas that has been augmented and repaired over the years, making it look a bit like a patchwork quilt. Dangling beneath the balloon by dozens of thick ropes hangs the “body” of the *Steambolt*, a sailing ship with its masts removed and four large fans mounted to its hull. An elaborate mechanism in the bowels of the ship turns these screws, allowing the *Steambolt* to move swiftly through the air. Like other hot-air balloons, the *Steambolt* rises by casting off ballast and lowers by releasing small amounts of air from its balloon.

Feravir Dunogh serves as the *Steambolt*'s eccentric captain and chief engineer, a gnome evoker who travels the world in his pecu-

CR 4

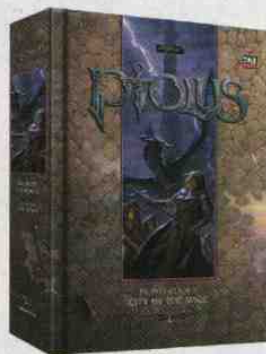
liar balloon. A crew of twelve other gnomes and dwarves accompany Feravir, most of them being trained crossbowmen, as most threats to the *Steambolt* are airborne. The balloon can also accommodate up to thirty passengers in somewhat cramped quarters. Such travelers provide the crew their main source of income.

In addition to taking on passengers for a fee, the *Steambolt* also serves as a mercenary vessel. In troubled times, its services are very much in demand. Being almost completely silent, the *Steambolt* makes an excellent scout ship, able to spot enemies from miles away and signal back to allied forces, or even transport soldiers or adventurers behind enemy lines. In addition, the *Steambolt* carries an arsenal of what the crew calls “droppers”—stones, specially weighted arrows, oil flasks, and other alchemical items to bombard enemies on the ground.

Balloon: A convoluted net of hap-hazardly tied ropes keep the *Steambolt*'s massive balloon in place. The roughly 50-foot-wide, 150-foot-long bladder is oriented with its long axis parallel to the ship. A small enclosure lashed to the top of the balloon like a howdah on an elephant is accessible by two rope ladders mounted on either side. This enclosure consists of little more than a low railing and a frame for a canvas cover, which keeps the rain off the two crossbowmen typically stationed here as lookouts.

Within the balloon are six inaccessible compartments. Each compartment has a hardness of 2 and 25 hit points. If any compartment loses all of its hit points it bursts, losing its air but leaving adjacent compartments undamaged. The *Steambolt* can fly as normal with as many as three compartments destroyed. If a fourth is burst, the boat begins descending at a rate of 20 feet a round. If five compartments are destroyed the boat plummets, causing all aboard to take falling damage from the height the boat fell from, although half of this damage is nonlethal. Destroying all

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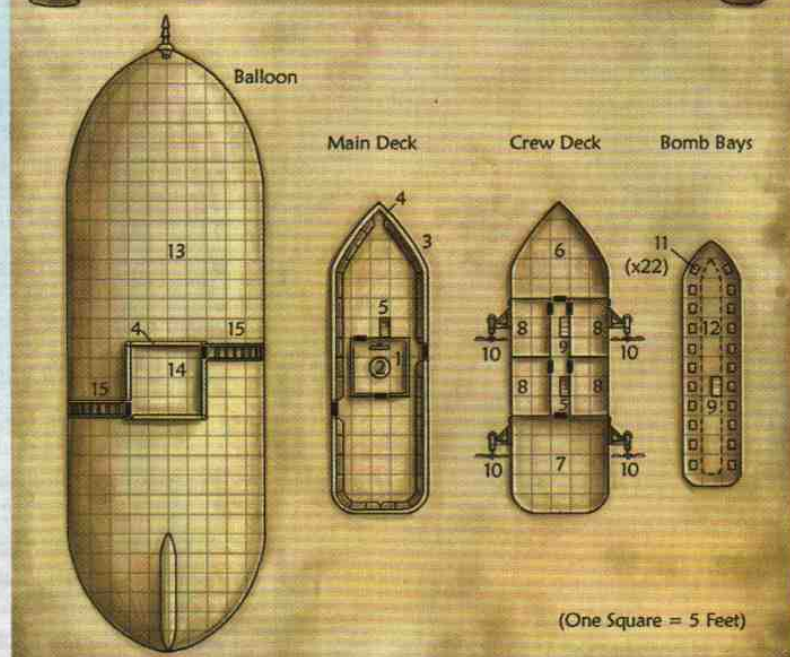




THE STEAMBOLT

KEY

- | | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| 1 Wheelhouse | 7 Common Room | 11 Lift-Out Bomb Hatch |
| 2 Furnace (for Balloon) | (sleeps 14 in bunks) | 12 Netted-Down Bombs |
| 3 Padded Bench | 8 Guest Cabin | and Supplies |
| 4 Railing | (sleeps 4 in bunks) | 13 Balloon |
| 5 Stairs Down | 9 Stairs Up | 14 Archers Enclosure |
| 6 Crew Cabin | 10 Fan | 15 Rope Ladder |
| (sleeps 13 in Bunks) | (Propulsion) | ■ = Door |



six compartments causes the ship and all aboard to take falling damage from the *Steambolt's* current altitude.

Main Deck: The main deck serves as a viewing platform with padded benches all around the rails. The wheelhouse stands at the deck's center, little more than

a window-rung enclosure for the boat's steering mechanism.

Crew Deck: The crew, including the captain, all share one quarter of this deck, sleeping in cozy bunks separate from the passengers. Four passenger cabins and one common room take up the other three quarters of the deck.

Each room can house four guests, while the common room can accommodate another fourteen in reasonable comfort. The walls of this deck are studded with portholes so passengers can enjoy the view from inside.

Bomb Bays: This is the only gnome-sized area aboard the *Steambolt*, the ceiling being less than 4 feet high. The bottom of the ship is studded with lift-out panels, each of which is held in place by large iron bolts on the inside of the hull. When the crew wants to bomb a ground target, they remove a panel, giving them a 3-foot-square hatch through which to pelt their enemies. The whole center area along the keel is given over to storing the various "droppers," giving the crew easy access to their ammunition from anywhere on this deck.

The Crew

Captain Feravir commands a close crew of twelve other gnomes and dwarves. Each being skilled as a pilot, engineer, or crossbowman, they all share the sentiment that the *Steambolt* is the most wondrous invention in all creation and give their all to protect it and keep it in top working order.

Although not the ship's inventor, Captain Feravir was a student of the vessel's original engineers and had a hand in its construction. Being one of the oldest crewmembers, he is intimately familiar with every inch of his vessel and has the uncanny ability to predict a malfunction or infer a damaged component merely by listening. Willing to experiment and eager to improve how his ship and crew works, Feravir welcomes the chance to travel to new places and gather new resources and ideas that he might put to use in his inventing. His interest is such that he often cuts deals to clients with far-flung requests or who offer to pay in equipment rather than gold. While the gnome commander often seems jittery, even distracted, he has the full support of his crew and none can pilot the *Steambolt* better than its captain.

ABOARD THE STEAMBOLT

The *Steambolt* is a ship for hire. Passengers may pay for space on the airship at the cost of 3 gp a day, 8 gp if they wish to hire out one of the passenger cabins as well. The vessel can also be hired to travel to specific destinations at a cost of 40 gp per day plus any expenditures the boat might incur during travel (such as for repairs).

Those encountering the *Steambolt* might make use of it in a variety of ways.

Bombs Away: The PCs are hired to defeat a band of hobgoblin raiders sacking nearby villages. No one has been able to track the hobgoblins back to their camps, so the PCs' employer suggests they hire the *Steambolt* to hunt down their quarry. Whether the PCs then choose to bombard the hobgoblins or descend to capture their chief is then up to them.

Fire in the Clouds: A young red dragon has attacked and temporarily grounded the *Steambolt*, making off with one of the airship's propellers to prove its mastery over the sky. Captain Feravir hires the PCs to return the massive propeller being held in the dragon's lair. In return, he offers them free use of the *Steambolt* for any task.

CAPTAIN FERA VIR

DUNOGH

Male gnome evoker 9

N Small humanoid

Init +1; **Senses** low-light vision; Listen +3, Spot +1

Language Common, Draconic, Gnome, Goblin, Orc

AC 13, touch 12, flat-footed 12

hp 50 (9 HD)

Fort +6, **Ref** +6, **Will** +5; +2 vs. illusions

Spd 20 ft. (4 squares)

Melee mwk quarterstaff +5 (1d4–1) or

Base Atk +4; **Grp** +2

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds* (2), *scroll of alarm*, *scroll of fireball* (CL 5th), *scroll of web*, *wand of magic missile* (CL 5th; 10 charges),

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 9th,

1d20+11 to overcome SR):

5th—*explosive fireball* (DC 18), *sending*

4th—*minor creation*, *stone shape*, *wall of fire* (DC 19)

3rd—*explosive burning hands* (DC 16), *fireball* (DC 18) (2), *shrink item*, *suggestion* (DC 16)

2nd—*arcane lock*, *invisibility* (2), *scorching ray* (+5 ranged touch) (2), *shatter* (DC 17)

1st—*animate rope*, *burning hands* (DC 16), *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *shield*, *unseen servant*

0—*mage hand*, *open/close*, *prestidigitation*, *ray of frost* (+5 ranged touch)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 1st):

CR 9

1/day—*dancing lights*, *ghost sound*, *prestidigitation*, *speaking with animals* (burrowing mammal only; duration 1 minute)

Abilities Str 8, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 17, Wis 8, Cha 12

SQ familiar (Widget), share spells

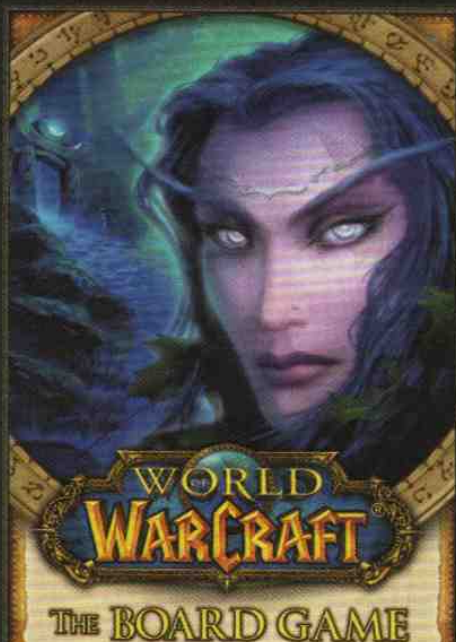
Feats Alertness (if familiar within 5 ft.), Craft Wondrous Item, Explosive Spell*, Greater Spell Focus (evocation), Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (evocation), Spell Penetration

Skills Craft (alchemy) +17, Craft (shipmaking) +15, Decipher Script +9, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +15, Listen +1, Profession (pilot) +11

Possessions combat gear plus *amulet of natural armor* +1, *bag of tricks* (gray), *Heward's handy haversack*, *lesser enlarge metamagic rod*, *Quaal's feather token* (anchor) (10), *Quaal's feather token* (fan) (4), *Quaal's feather token* (swan boat), *Quaal's feather token* (tree) (2), *Quaal's feather token* (whip) (2), flask of acid (5), alchemist's fire (5), smokestick (5), sunrod (10), tanglefoot bag (4), thunderstone (5), tindertwig (30)

Spellbook spells prepared plus 0—all except enchantment and necromancy; 1st—*identify*; 4th—*fire shield*; 5th—*wall of force*.

* See page 79 of *Complete Arcane*. ☐



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Not every dragon soars through the skies on leathery wings in search of treasure and prey. Some live below the waves, terrorizing sailors and prowling the depths of their vast and mysterious home. These aquatic dragons, or sea serpents as they are commonly called, are a menace to those who chance upon their paths, capable of sinking ships and devouring their crews with ease. Sailors often mark their maps with the homes of such beasts, for indeed there are monsters living in the depths.



SEA SERPENTS

DRAGONS OF THE BRINY DEPTHS

by Morgan Peer and Tracey Peer
illustrated by Attila Adorjany

Sea serpents are vast draconic creatures that dwell largely beneath the waves. Feared for their enormous size, crushing coils, and terrifying breath, older sea serpents are among the most powerful inhabitants of the seas, capable of driving even such beasts as krakens before them.

Long and sinuous, a sea serpent could almost pass for an aquatic snake of enormous size except for the distinctly draconic head and two powerful arms that belie its heritage. Of some relation to true dragons, sea serpents also separate into distinct breeds, all of which are vile, fierce creatures, much like chromatic dragons. The most common sea serpents are crested, lantern, and spiked.

Like true dragons, sea serpents gain great power and size as they age. Upon hatching, they might only measure a few feet, but the eldest stretch well over 100 feet long, with some stories suggesting even larger specimens. They use the same age categories as true dragons.

Sea serpents are carnivores and tend to have prodigious appetites. Accordingly, sea serpents have a huge range, and can be extremely territorial, attacking other large predators. Some point to this territoriality as the reason sea serpents

attack ships, claiming the serpents mistake them for other predators. This is patently untrue. Sea serpents lust after the treasure in such ships' hulls as well as their delicious crews.

With the exception of lantern sea serpents, most serpents typically live in shallower waters where the food is plentiful. This is, however, not the limit of their range, as all sea serpents are fully capable of sinking to the deepest depths of the oceans and hunting there, or crawling onto land in pursuit of prey. Few choose to remain on land for any length of time, as this is where they are most vulnerable.

Regardless of any individual differences, all sea serpents are incredibly greedy and covet anything of value. Unlike true dragons, however, they do not lair with their treasure, instead content to visit their vast treasure hoards buried in undersea caves or in vast treacherous coral reefs, when time permits.

All sea serpents speak Draconic.

COMBAT

A sea serpent attacks with its powerful bite, wicked claws, and tail slap. Older sea serpents use their immense serpentine bulk to coil around

opponents and crush them. All sea serpents use the Dragon Space/Reach, Attack, and Damage chart found on page 69 of the *Monster Manual* to determine their types of attacks and damage. Sea serpents do not possess wing or crush attacks. Instead, upon reaching Medium size, a sea serpent gains the ability to constrict opponents it has grappled.

Amphibious (Ex): Sea serpents can breathe air as easily as they breathe water.

Constrict (Ex): A sea serpent of Medium size or larger deals damage with a successful grapple check. The amount of damage dealt depends upon the creature's size, as indicated on the following chart. The sea serpent adds 1-1/2 times its Strength bonus on damage rolls made to constrict.

Size	Constrict Damage
Medium	1d8
Large	2d8
Huge	3d8
Gargantuan	4d8
Colossal	6d8

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the sea serpent must hit with

ADVENTURE HOOKS

- An important artifact has been lost at sea and now resides in a crested sea serpent's hoard. The creature won't give up the item without a fight and is certainly going to fight dirty to protect it, collapsing the ruins of sunken ships upon opponents, preferably while those opponents are hypnotized and unmoving.
- A bard offers to pay the party to bring her a crested sea serpent so she may better understand, and possibly utilize, its musical powers.

its bite or tail slap attacks. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins a grapple check, it establishes a hold. If it gets a hold with its bite it can attempt to swallow the foe the following round. If it gets a hold with its tail slap it can constrict.

Swallow Whole (Ex): A sea serpent can attempt to swallow an opponent at least two size categories smaller than itself by making a successful grapple check. Once inside, the opponent takes bite damage plus 1d8 points of acid damage every round from the serpent's digestive tract. A swallowed creature can attempt to cut its way out by using a light slashing or piercing weapon to deal 3 points of damage per age category of the sea serpent to its digestive tract (AC 15). Once the creature exits, muscular action closes the hole; other swallowed opponents must cut their own ways out.

A sea serpent's digestive tract can hold up to one opponent of two size categories smaller than itself, and four times as many of each size category below that. For example, a Huge sea serpent's digestive tract can hold 1 Medium, 4 Small, 16 Tiny, or 64 Diminutive or smaller opponents.

SEA SERPENT SOCIETY

It is believed that sea serpents have a common heritage with dragons, but neither sea serpents nor dragons have proved willing to confirm this theory. Further, there is very little interaction

between sea serpents and dragons except when they occupy common territories, in which territorial disputes are resolved quickly and brutally.

Sea serpents also tend to avoid each other. The only exceptions to this are mating or forming a conclave, when the eldest sea serpents gather in a deep undersea moot to discuss pressing problems. No creature aside from a sea serpent has ever been close enough to a sea serpent moot to discern what is discussed, although it has been suggested that nothing agreed upon in such a conclave of evil could possibly be good.

Sea serpents tend to mate for life at the young adult or adult age category but maintain separate territories at all times other than when the urge to breed takes over. They lay clutches of 1d6+1 eggs, which are kept within a temporarily shared lair. After the young reach juvenile age they leave to find their own territories and their parents separate until the urge to mate compels them once more.

CRESTED SEA SERPENT

Dragon (Water)

Environment: Temperate aquatic

Organization: Wyrmling, very young, young, and juvenile: solitary or clutch (2–5); young adult, adult, mature adult, old, very old, ancient, wyrm, or great wyrm: solitary or family (1–2 and 2–5 offspring)

Challenge Ratings: Wyrmling 3; very young 4; young 5; juvenile 7; young adult 8; adult 11; mature adult 13; old 15; very old 18; ancient 20; wyrm 22; great wyrm 24

Treasure: Double standard

Alignment: Usually neutral evil

Advancement: Wyrmling 6–7 HD; very young 9–10 HD; young 12–13 HD; juvenile 15–16 HD; young adult 18–19 HD; adult 21–22 HD; mature adult 24–25 HD; old 27–28 HD; very old 30–31 HD; ancient 33–34 HD; wyrm 36–37 HD; great wyrm 39+ HD

Level Adjustment: Wyrmling +3; very young +3; young +3; juvenile +4; others —

The serpent's head is surrounded by an elegant, complex, bony frill that makes the beast seem even larger than its massive bulk suggests. The scent of seawater surrounds it and a faint fluting can be heard on the wind.

The most intelligent and predatory sea serpent, crested sea serpents see themselves as lords of the sea. These foul yet beautiful beasts make cruel overlords, often demanding more than their servants and followers can give. As fluid as the sea itself, however, they can also be given to generosity, on occasion, toward those they consider loyal.

Long and sinuous, the crested sea serpent has a large bony frill surrounding its head behind the skull. This frill can be laid back against the sea serpent's body for rapid swimming but is normally fully extended. Lined with tiny tubes and resonating chambers, the frill is the source of the crested sea serpents' most unusual power: It allows a crested sea serpent to sing its hypnotic song.

Crested sea serpents tend to lair within ancient coral. Their servants are taken from normal reef inhabitants—frequently merfolk. Older and more powerful crested serpents conquer undersea kingdoms and rule from the aquatic palaces, possibly exacting tribute from coastal communities.

COMBAT

Unlike their kin, crested sea serpents prefer to lure their prey into traps. Using *suggestion* to trick a ship's pilot into smashing his ship on submerged rocks is a favored tactic, as is using thralls to do the fighting for them.

Breath Weapon (Su): A crested sea serpent has one kind of breath weapon, a line of sonic energy. Creatures caught in the line of sonic energy receive a Reflex save for half damage.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*hypnotism*, *suggestion* (old or older); 3/day—*charm person* (very young or older), *charm monster* (adult or older), *dispel magic* (juvenile or older); 1/day—*mass suggestion* (great wyrm). These abilities are all as cast by a bard of level equal

to the sea serpent's hit dice. The save DC, however, is equal to a Perform (crest harmonics) skill check made by the crested sea serpent when the spell is cast.

Skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, and Perform (crest harmonics) are considered class skills for crested sea serpents.

ADULT CRESTED SEA SERPENT

CR 11

NE Huge dragon (water)

Init +2; **Senses** blindsense 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., keen senses; Listen +26, Spot +26

Aura frightful presence (180 ft. radius, DC 25)

Languages Common, Draconic

AC 28, touch 10, flat-footed 26

hp 230 (20 HD); **DR** 5/magic

Immune paralysis, sleep

SR 17

Fort +17, **Ref** +14, **Will** +15

Spd 40 ft. (8 squares), swim 100 ft.

Melee bite +27 (2d8+8/19–20) and 2 claws +21 (2d6+4) and tail slap +21 (2d6+12)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft. (15 ft. with bite)

Base Atk +20; **Grp** +36

Atk Options Cleave, constrict (3d8+12), improved grab, Power Attack

Special Actions breath weapon, Improved Overrun, Improved Sunder, swallow whole

Spell-like Abilities (CL 20th, DC = Perform [crest harmonics] check)



CRESTED SERPENT

CRESTED SEA SERPENTS BY AGE

Age	Size	Hit Dice (hp)	Str	Dex	Con	Int	Wis	Cha	Base Attack/ Grapple	Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Breath Weapon (DC)	Frightful Presence DC
Wyrmling	S	5d12+10 (42)	13	14	15	6	11	14	+5/+2	+7	+6	+6	+4	1d6 (14)	—
Very young	M	8d12+24 (76)	15	14	17	8	11	16	+8/+10	+10	+9	+8	+6	2d6 (17)	—
Young	L	11d12+33 (104)	17	14	17	8	13	16	+11/+18	+13	+10	+9	+8	3d6 (18)	—
Juvenile	L	14d12+56 (147)	19	14	19	10	15	18	+14/+22	+17	+13	+11	+11	4d6 (21)	—
Young adult	L	17d12+85 (195)	23	14	21	10	15	18	+17/+27	+22	+15	+12	+12	5d6 (23)	22
Adult	H	20d12+100 (230)	27	14	21	12	17	20	+20/+36	+26	+17	+14	+15	6d6 (25)	25
Mature adult	H	23d12+138 (287)	29	14	23	12	17	22	+23/+40	+30	+19	+15	+16	7d6 (27)	27
Old	H	26d12+182 (351)	31	14	25	14	19	24	+26/+44	+34	+22	+17	+19	8d6 (30)	30
Very old	G	29d12+232 (420)	33	14	27	14	19	28	+29/+52	+36	+24	+18	+20	9d6 (32)	33
Ancient	G	32d12+288 (496)	35	14	29	16	21	28	+32/+56	+40	+27	+20	+23	10d6 (35)	35
Wyrm	G	35d12+350 (577)	37	14	31	16	21	30	+35/+60	+44	+29	+21	+24	11d6 (37)	37
Great wyrm	C	38d12+380 (627)	39	14	31	18	23	32	+38/+68	+44	+31	+23	+27	12d6 (39)	40

CRESTED SEA SERPENT ABILITIES BY AGE

Age	Speed	Initiative	AC	Special Abilities	SR
Wyrmling	40 ft., swim 80 ft.	+2	16 (+1 size, +2 Dex, +3 natural) touch 13, flat-footed 14	Amphibious, hypnotism	—
Very young	40 ft., swim 100 ft.	+2	18 (+2 Dex, +6 natural) touch 12, flat-footed 16	Charm person	—
Young	40 ft., swim 100 ft.	+2	20 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +9 natural) touch 11, flat-footed 18		—
Juvenile	40 ft., swim 100 ft.	+2	23 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +12 natural) touch 11, flat-footed 21	Dispel magic	—
Young adult	40 ft., swim 100 ft.	+2	26 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +15 natural) touch 11, flat-footed 24	DR 5/magic	15
Adult	40 ft., swim 100 ft.	+2	28 (-2 size, +2 Dex, +18 natural) touch 10, flat-footed 26	Charm monster	17
Mature adult	40 ft., swim 100 ft.	+2	31 (-2 size, +2 Dex, +21 natural) touch 10, flat-footed 29	DR 10/magic	19
Old	40 ft., swim 100 ft.	+2	34 (-2 size, +2 Dex, +24 natural) touch 10, flat-footed 32	Suggestion	21
Very old	40 ft., swim 100 ft.	+2	35 (-4 size, +2 Dex, +27 natural) touch 8, flat-footed 33	DR 15/magic	23
Ancient	40 ft., swim 120 ft.	+2	38 (-4 size, +2 Dex, +30 natural) touch 8, flat-footed 36		25
Wyrmling	40 ft., swim 120 ft.	+2	41 (-4 size, +2 Dex, +33 natural) touch 8, flat-footed 39	DR 20/magic	27
Great wyrmling	40 ft., swim 120 ft.	+2	40 (-8 size, +2 Dex, +36 natural) touch 4, flat-footed 38	Mass suggestion	29

ADVENTURE HOOKS

- Skilled coastal armorers are always on the lookout for powerful groups interested in hunting lantern sea serpents. When low on cash, a huge financial incentive might be just what the party needs to get going again.
- For some reason, a scared young lantern sea serpent has taken to attacking local ships. The PCs are offered a chance to hunt it down and kill it. The quest lies in discovering the horror that lurks in the deep, so frightening that a lantern sea serpent would abandon the ocean's depths and hunt so close to the surface?

At will—hypnotism

3/day—charm monster, charm person, dispel magic

Abilities Str 27, Dex 14, Con 21, Int 12, Wis 17, Cha 20

SQ amphibious

Feats Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Overrun, Improved Sunder, Power

Attack, Weapon Focus (bite)
Skills Bluff +21, Concentration +28, Diplomacy +24, Listen +26, Perform (crest harmonics) +28, Sense Motive +20, Spot +26, Swim +39

Breath Weapon (Su) 100 ft.-line, 6d6 sonic, Reflex DC 25 half

LANTERN SEA SERPENT

Dragon (Water)

Environment: Temperate aquatic

Organization: Wyrmling, very young, young, and juvenile: solitary or clutch (2-5); young adult, adult, mature adult, old, very old, ancient, wyrmling, or great wyrmling: solitary or family (1-2 and 2-5 offspring)

Challenge Ratings: Wyrmling 4; very young 5; young 7; juvenile 8; young adult 10; adult 12; mature adult 14; old 16; very old 19; ancient 21; wyrmling 23; great wyrmling 25

Treasure: Double standard

Alignment: Always lawful evil

Advancement: Wyrmling 7-8 HD; very young 10-11 HD; young 13-14 HD; juvenile 16-17 HD; young adult 19-

20 HD; adult 22-23 HD; mature adult 25-26 HD; old 28-29 HD; very old 31-32 HD; ancient 34-35 HD; wyrmling 37-38 HD; great wyrmling 40+ HD

Level Adjustment: Wyrmling +4, very young +4, young +5; juvenile +5; others —

Pulsating organs are eerily visible through the sea serpent's translucent flesh, making its exact shape difficult to discern. Standing out from its forehead is a long tentacle ending in a bulb that throbs with a deep red glow. It undulates forward with deathly silence, a faint sulfurous odor permeating the area.

The undisputed overlords of all aquatic wyrmlings, lantern sea serpents are strong, evil, and obsessed with power. Other sea serpents try to avoid them and none directly disobey a lantern sea serpent unless they are convinced they can kill it. Lantern sea serpents take their dominion extremely seriously and do not brook violations. They react to serious challenges

to their authority ferociously and in number.

Lantern sea serpents have translucent flesh, skin, and scales, allowing observers a view of their internal organs. This eerie sight belies the true strength of their hide, fooling many into believing it is soft and yielding, when it is actually stronger than steel. A long, tentaclelike protrusion extends from the crest of the skull and ends in a large, glowing bulb. This bulb is the light from which the lantern sea serpent derives its name and, if severed, it grows back quickly over the course of its healing. The strength of the glow is consciously controlled by the sea serpent and is not indicative of anything other than what the lantern sea serpent wants its glow to be.

Although they are the masters of all sea serpents, lantern sea serpents do not appear to take any joy from their position. The exact motives and desires of lantern sea serpents remain a mystery to the surface world, but they do

occasionally sink ships, as all sea serpents are wont to, and they do encourage the occasional cult that starts worshiping them. Some sages speculate that lantern sea serpents are working toward some sort of aquatic apocalypse, but there is little clear evidence to support this opinion.

The typical lantern sea serpent's lair is hidden deep in the ocean and is usually an enormous, templelike complex built in some ancient time by unknown hands. The construction of these lairs resembles nothing in surface architecture. Lantern sea serpents dwell in these lairs in small family groups and occasionally summon sea serpents of other types down to the depths for a great sea serpent moot.

The lantern serpent's scaly hide can be worked into armor like a true dragon's hide, but this armor is transparent, making nobles willing to pay much more for it. A suit of armor made from lantern sea serpent hide



LANTERN SERPENT

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on the open market can fetch ten times the price as a suit of similar armor made from true dragon hide.

COMBAT

Lantern sea serpents carefully plan before an attack. Using their spell-like abilities, lantern serpents soften up their prey, weakening their

victims before they strike. Then they attack physically, destroying whatever is left of their prey.

Breath Weapon (Su): A lantern sea serpent has one kind of breath weapon, a line of crackling red lightning. Creatures caught in the line of electricity receive a Reflex save for half damage.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*color spray*, *hold monster* (great wyrm), *hypnotic pattern* (adult or older); 3/day—*dispel magic* (young or older), *prismatic spray* (old or older).

Skills: Hide, Intimidate, and Move Silently are considered class skills for lantern sea serpents.

LANTERN SEA SERPENTS BY AGE

Age	Size	Hit Dice (hp)	Str	Dex	Con	Int	Wis	Cha	Base Attack/ Grapple	Attack	Fort	Ref	Will	Breath Weapon (DC)	Frightful Presence DC
Wyrmling	M	6d12+12 (51)	13	10	15	12	13	12	+6/+7	+7	+7	+5	+6	1d6 (15)	—
Very young	M	9d12+27 (85)	15	10	17	12	13	12	+9/+11	+11	+9	+6	+7	3d6 (17)	—
Young	L	12d12+36 (114)	17	10	17	14	15	14	+12/+19	+14	+11	+8	+10	5d6 (19)	—
Juvenile	L	15d12+60 (157)	19	10	19	14	15	14	+15/+23	+18	+13	+9	+11	7d6 (21)	—
Young adult	L	18d12+90 (207)	23	10	21	16	17	16	+18/+28	+23	+16	+11	+14	9d6 (24)	22
Adult	H	21d12+105 (241)	27	10	21	16	17	16	+21/+37	+27	+17	+12	+15	11d6 (25)	23
Mature adult	H	24d12+144 (300)	29	10	23	18	19	18	+24/+41	+31	+20	+14	+18	13d6 (28)	26
Old	H	27d12+189 (364)	31	10	25	18	19	18	+27/+45	+35	+22	+15	+19	15d6 (30)	27
Very old	G	30d12+240 (435)	33	10	27	20	21	20	+30/+53	+37	+25	+17	+22	17d6 (33)	30
Ancient	G	33d12+297 (511)	35	10	29	20	21	20	+33/+57	+41	+27	+18	+23	19d6 (35)	31
Wyrm	G	36d12+360 (594)	39	10	31	22	23	22	+36/+62	+46	+30	+20	+26	21d6 (38)	34
Great wyrm	C	39d12+390 (643)	43	10	31	22	23	22	+39/+71	+47	+31	+21	+27	23d6 (39)	35

LANTERN SEA SERPENT ABILITIES BY AGE

Age	Speed	Initiative	AC	Special Abilities	SR
Wyrmling	30 ft., swim 80 ft.	+0	16 (+6 natural) touch 10, flat-footed 16	Amphibious, <i>color spray</i>	—
Very young	30 ft., swim 80 ft.	+0	19 (+9 natural) touch 10, flat-footed 19		—
Young	40 ft., swim 100 ft.	+0	21 (–1 size, +12 natural) touch 9, flat-footed 21	<i>Dispel magic</i>	—
Juvenile	40 ft., swim 100 ft.	+0	24 (–1 size, +15 natural) touch 9, flat-footed 24		—
Young adult	40 ft., swim 100 ft.	+0	27 (–1 size, +18 natural) touch 9, flat-footed 27	DR 5/magic	20
Adult	40 ft., swim 100 ft.	+0	29 (–2 size, +21 natural) touch 8, flat-footed 29	<i>Hypnotic pattern</i>	22
Mature adult	40 ft., swim 100 ft.	+0	32 (–2 size, +24 natural) touch 8, flat-footed 32	DR 10/magic	23
Old	40 ft., swim 100 ft.	+0	35 (–2 size, +27 natural) touch 8, flat-footed 35	<i>Prismatic spray</i>	25
Very old	40 ft., swim 100 ft.	+0	36 (–4 size, +30 natural) touch 6, flat-footed 36	DR 15/magic	26
Ancient	40 ft., swim 120 ft.	+0	39 (–4 size, +33 natural) touch 6, flat-footed 39		28
Wyrm	40 ft., swim 120 ft.	+0	42 (–4 size, +36 natural) touch 6, flat-footed 42	DR 20/magic	29
Great wyrm	40 ft., swim 120 ft.	+0	41 (–8 size, +39 natural) touch 2, flat-footed 41	<i>Hold monster</i>	31

VERY YOUNG LANTERN SERPENT CR 5

LE Medium dragon (water)

Init +4; Senses blindsense 60 ft.,
darkvision 120 ft., keen senses; Listen
+13, Spot +13

Languages Common, Draconic

AC 19, touch 10, flat-footed 19

hp 85 (9 HD)

Immune paralysis, sleep

Fort +9, Ref +8, Will +7

Spd 40 ft. (8 squares), swim 80 ft.

Melee bite +11 (1d8+2) and
2 claws +9 (1d6+1)

Space 5 ft.; R each 5 ft.

Base Atk +9; Grp +11

Atk Options constrict (1d8+3),

improved grab, Power Attack

Special Actions breath weapon, swallow
whole

Spell-like Abilities (CL 9th)

At will—color spray (DC 12)

Abilities Str 15, Dex 10, Con 17, Int 12,
Wis 13, Cha 12

SQ water breathing

Feats Improved Initiative, Lightning
Reflexes, Multiattack, Power Attack

Skills Concentration +15, Hide +12,
Intimidate +13, Listen +13, Move
Silently +12, Spot +13, Swim +22

Breath Weapon (Su) 60 ft.-line, 3d6
electricity, Reflex DC 17 half

SPIKED SEA SERPENT

Dragon (Water)

Environment: Temperate aquatic

Organization: Wyrmling, very young,
young, and juvenile: solitary or clutch
(2–5); young adult, adult, mature
adult, old, very old, ancient, wyrm,
or great wyrm: solitary or family (1–2
and 2–5 offspring)

Challenge Ratings: Wyrmling 2; very
young 4; young 5; juvenile 7; young
adult 9; adult 11; mature adult 14; old
16; very old 18; ancient 20; wyrm 21;
great wyrm 23

Treasure: Double standard

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: Wyrmling 5–6 HD; very
young 8–9 HD; young 11–12 HD;
juvenile 14–15 HD; young adult 17–18
HD; adult 20–21 HD; mature adult
23–24 HD; old 26–27 HD; very old

29–30 HD; ancient 32–33 HD; wyrm
35–36 HD; great wyrm 38+ HD

Level Adjustment: Wyrmling +3, very
young +3, young +4; juvenile +4;
others —

*This sea serpent smells of brine-soaked
carion and is covered in bristling lines
of wickedly serrated spikes. Starting just
behind the jaw and at the top of the skull,
rows of spikes run down the length of a
spiked sea serpent's body, terminating in
one long spike on the tip of the tail. Its
beady eyes shine with a feral cunning.*

The weakest of the common sea
serpents, spiked sea serpents are
vicious, feral creatures that attack
others, relentlessly seeking food,
treasure, or simply dominance of their
area. Covered in vicious barbs, the
spiked sea serpent thrashes through
the water. These spikes regularly tear
out in combat but they regrow rapidly
and are incredibly numerous.

Extremely territorial, spiked
sea serpents attack any perceived
competition, but are more than
willing to allow lesser creatures to
hunt within their range so long as
they are considered truly inferior.
Typically, this means a mated pair
of spiked sea serpents includes one
much younger serpent (at least three
age categories younger), preventing
any serious competition between
the two.

Spiked sea serpents tend to bury
themselves in the muddy ocean floor
when sleeping. Their treasure and
clutches of eggs are usually buried
near that patch of mud.

COMBAT

Older spiked sea serpents launch spikes
at their opponents before closing, but
once in melee, they wrap themselves
about their foes. Unlike other sea
serpents, however, after crushing an
opponent for 1 round a spiked sea
serpent typically disentangles itself and
withdraws, letting blood loss from its
spikes do its job for it. This is especially
true if the spiked sea serpent is fighting
multiple opponents.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

- A tribe of locathahs is in desperate need of help due to a nasty spiked sea serpent that has moved into the tribes area. The serpent is devouring all of the locathahs' food and they fear it may soon turn upon them. Although they are incapable of slaying the serpent, they hope that some surface dwellers might be able to kill it or at least lure it to another area.
- Interested in the toxins released by spiked sea serpents, an alchemists guild has offered vast sums of gold for the intact carcass of an old or older spiked sea serpent.

Maddening Spikes (Su): At the old age category, spiked sea serpents gain the ability to incite madness through the toxin in their spikes. Any living creature wounded by a launched spike or through a constrict attack must also make a Will save (DC equal to 10 + 1/2 dragon's HD + dragon's Con modifier) or become maddened for 1d6 rounds. During this time, the creature acts as if under the effects of *confusion*. This is a poison effect.

Launch Spikes (Su): An adult or older spiked sea serpent is capable of launching one of its spikes every round as a ranged weapon, up to a maximum of ten times per day. Treat the spike as a ranged weapon with a range increment of 50 feet. It causes the same damage as a bite from the spiked serpent, but it receives no Strength modifier on damage rolls and uses the spiked sea serpent's Dexterity modifier on the attack rolls.

Spiked Body (Ex): Due to the razor-sharp spikes all along their bodies, spiked sea serpents cause damage with constrict attacks as a sea serpent one size category larger. Colossal spiked sea serpents deal 8d8 points of damage on a constrict attack. One half of a spiked sea serpent's constrict damage is piercing while the other half is bludgeoning.

Wounding Spikes (Ex): A spiked sea serpent's spikes develop jagged edges at the very young age. Any time it deals damage with a constrict attack against

a living opponent that opponent starts to bleed, taking half the serpent's Strength modifier (minimum 1) in additional damage every round. This continuing blood loss can be stopped by a DC 20 Heal check, a *cure* spell, or a *heal* spell. This bleeding is not cumulative with itself.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*inflict serious wounds* (juvenile or older); 1/day—*symbol of insanity* (great wyrm). These abilities are all as cast by a sorcerer of level equal to the sea serpent's hit dice (save DC 10 + sea serpent's Charisma modifier + spell level).

Skills: Climb, Intimidate, and Survival are considered class skills for spiked sea serpents.

VERY OLD SPIKED SEA SERPENT CR 17

CE Huge dragon (water)

Init +5; Senses blindsense 60 ft.,

SPIKED SEA SERPENTS BY AGE

Age	Size	Hit Dice (hp)	Str	Dex	Con	Int	Wis	Cha	Base Attack/		Fort	Ref	Will	Frightful Presence
									Grapple	Attack	Save	Save	Save	DC
Wyrmling	S	4d12+8 (34)	9	12	15	4	11	10	+4/-1	+4	+6	+5	+4	—
Very young	M	7d12+21 (66)	11	12	17	4	11	10	+7/+7	+7	+8	+6	+5	—
Young	M	10d12+30 (95)	15	12	17	6	13	12	+10/+12	+12	+10	+8	+8	—
Juvenile	L	13d12+52 (136)	17	12	19	6	15	14	+13/+20	+15	+12	+9	+10	—
Young adult	L	16d12+80 (184)	21	12	21	8	15	14	+16/+25	+20	+15	+11	+12	20
Adult	L	19d12+95 (218)	25	12	21	8	17	16	+19/+30	+25	+16	+12	+14	22
Mature adult	H	22d12+132 (275)	27	12	23	8	17	16	+22/+38	+28	+19	+14	+16	24
Old	H	25d12+175 (337)	29	12	25	10	19	18	+25/+42	+32	+21	+15	+18	26
Very old	H	28d12+224 (406)	31	12	27	10	19	18	+28/+46	+36	+24	+17	+20	28
Ancient	G	31d12+279 (480)	33	12	29	10	21	20	+31/+54	+38	+26	+18	+22	30
Wyrm	G	34d12+340 (561)	35	12	31	12	21	20	+34/+58	+42	+29	+20	+24	32
Great wyrm	G	37d12+370 (610)	37	12	31	12	23	22	+37/+62	+46	+31	+21	+26	34

SPIKED SEA SERPENT ABILITIES BY AGE

Age	Speed	Initiative AC	Special Abilities	SR
Wyrmling	10 ft., swim 60 ft.	+1 16 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +4 natural) touch 12, flat-footed 15	Amphibious, spiked body	—
Very young	10 ft., swim 80 ft.	+1 18 (+1 Dex, +7 natural) touch 11, flat-footed 17	Wounding spikes	—
Young	10 ft., swim 80 ft.	+1 21 (+1 Dex, +10 natural) touch 11, flat-footed 20		—
Juvenile	10 ft., swim 80 ft.	+1 23 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +13 natural) touch 10, flat-footed 22	<i>Inflict serious wounds</i>	—
Young adult	10 ft., swim 80 ft.	+1 26 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +16 natural) touch 10, flat-footed 25	DR 5/magic	12
Adult	10 ft., swim 80 ft.	+1 29 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +19 natural) touch 10, flat-footed 28	Launch spikes	14
Mature adult	10 ft., swim 80 ft.	+1 31 (-2 size, +1 Dex, +22 natural) touch 9, flat-footed 30	DR 10/magic	16
Old	10 ft., swim 80 ft.	+1 34 (-2 size, +1 Dex, +25 natural) touch 9, flat-footed 33	Maddening spikes	18
Very old	10 ft., swim 80 ft.	+1 37 (-2 size, +1 Dex, +28 natural) touch 9, flat-footed 36	DR 15/magic	20
Ancient	10 ft., swim 100 ft.	+1 39 (-4 size, +1 Dex, +31 natural) touch 7, flat-footed 38		22
Wyrm	10 ft., swim 100 ft.	+1 41 (-4 size, +1 Dex, +34 natural) touch 7, flat-footed 40	DR 20/magic	24
Great wyrm	10 ft., swim 100 ft.	+1 44 (-4 size, +1 Dex, +37 natural) touch 7, flat-footed 43	<i>Symbol of insanity</i>	26



SPIRED SERPENT

darkvision 120 ft., keen senses; Listen +35, Spot +35

Aura frightful presence (270 ft. radius, DC 28)

Languages Draconic

AC 37, touch 9, flat-footed 36

hp 406 (28 HD); **DR** 15/magic

Immune paralysis, sleep

SR 20

Fort +24, **Ref** +17, **Will** +20

Spd 10 ft. (2 squares), swim 80 ft.

Melee bite +37 (2d8+10/19–20) and 2 claws +34 (2d6+5) and tail slap +34 (2d6+15)

Ranged spike +27 (2d8)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft. (15 ft. with bite)

Base Atk +28; **Grp** +46

Atk Options constrict (4d8+15), Great

Cleave, improved grab, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack

Special Actions swallow whole

Spell-like Abilities (CL 20th)

At will—*inflict serious wounds* (DC 17)

Abilities Str 31, Dex 12, Con 27, Int 10, Wis 19, Cha 18

SQ amphibious, launch spikes, maddening spikes (DC 32), spiked body, wounding spikes (5)

Feats Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Track, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Intimidate +35, Listen +35, Sense Motive +35, Spot +35, Survival +35, Swim +49



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The Ecology of the

ANNIS HAG

Not all tales of lurking monsters and hungry witches are mere fantasies to terrify children. In the lonely, rotten places of the world, where few tread out of instinctual fear, rule undisputed queens of bitterness and savagery. Witches, ogresses, hags—these cursed crones give form to hatreds as old as the world and no story of their cruelty has ever exaggerated the truth.

This examination marks the second in a three-part series exploring the twisted minds, warped powers, and bizarre lifecycles of the most feared and deadly subspecies of hags. The first in this series, “The Ecology of the Green Hag,” appeared in *DRAGON* #331.

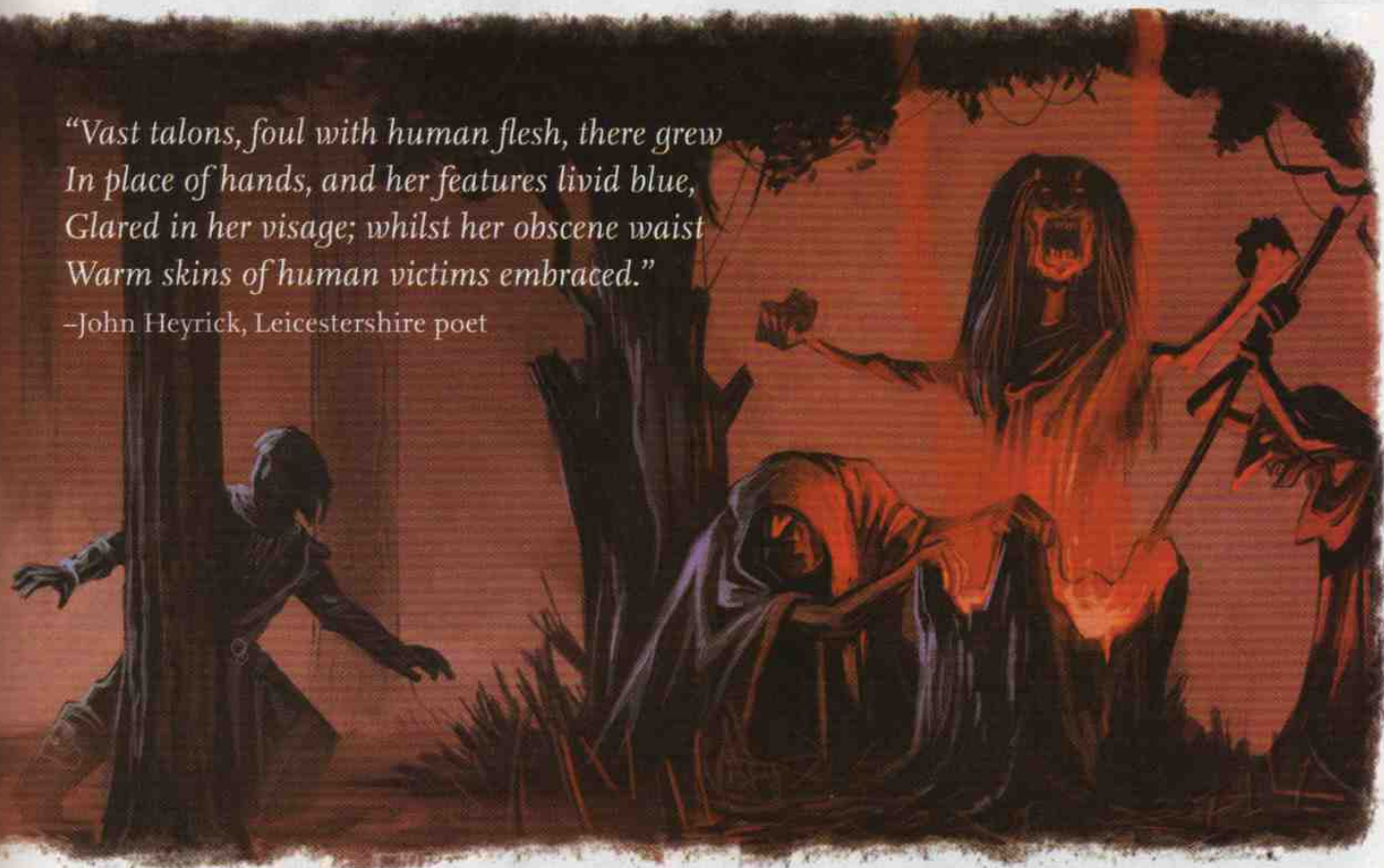
HISTORY OF THE ANNIS HAG

While most of the civilized races discount the self-aggrandizing boasts and blatant lies hags claim as their heritages, a myth long held by ogres and hill giants corroborates one legend and possibly hints at the true origins of hags.

In the dark of a young world the fearful races sought protection from the terrors that haunted the night. In response to the multitude's unheeded prayers the moon came into being and brought with it a queen who ruled over its light—Cegilune.

*"Vast talons, foul with human flesh, there grew
In place of hands, and her features livid blue,
Glared in her visage; whilst her obscene waist
Warm skins of human victims embraced."*

—John Heyrick, Leicestershire poet



Cegilune's worship quickly spread across lands and through numerous races. A silver-haired beauty, she was said to be as fickle as the nighted orb over which she held sway, and thus her followers constantly courted her favor. Those who pleased her best, pious priestesses whose comely forms reminded her most of herself, Cegilune adopted as her daughters and granted them powers with which to further her worship. The so-called songs of Cegilune were granted beautiful voices to entice others to her service, Cegilune's prophets were given the power to tread across water as easily as land so to spread her word, and the protectors of Cegilune were granted great strength with which to defend the goddess's followers.

For an age, Cegilune garnered the fear and love of her worshipers, but eventually she grew complacent, indulging in her followers' adoration but rarely intervening on their behalves. At the same time, the deities of distant lands began to encroach upon her disciples' hearts. Only when a wrinkle first marred the moon goddess's

KNOWLEDGE OF ANNIS HAGS

The following table shows the result of a Knowledge (nature) check as it relates to annis hags. Those who live near lonely moors or marshes, particularly in frigid climes, or who have dealings with lesser giants such as trolls or ogres might possess this information, even if only in the form of colloquial legends.

Knowledge (nature)

DC Result

- | | |
|----|--|
| 10 | Annis hags are hideous, blue-skinned ogresses who lurk in marshes and other dark, rotting places. |
| 15 | An annis hag's claws are made of rusted metal and, along with her great strength, can rend an armored knight to bits. |
| 20 | Annis hags are incredibly resilient to all attacks but the blows of blunted weapons. These defenses can also turn away less powerful magics. |
| 25 | An annis hag often uses her magical abilities to disguise herself as a large human or comely giant. They can also summon dense clouds of cold fog to cloak their approach. |
| 30 | Annis hags are, even among hags, especially egotistical and seek to dominate the lands and creatures around them. This vanity can often be exploited through gifts of magic and live food. |

supposedly eternal beauty did she realize her error. Appearing before her remaining followers, the goddess found that only her daughters had remained devout, but that they too had aged as she weakened. Others who had left her fold bitterly mocked the moon goddess, flaunting the powers of their

new divine patrons. Enraged, Cegilune slaughtered hundreds of her former worshipers, sending her remaining daughters on a bloody crusade.

The moon goddess's holy war was terrible but brief. Cegilune's willsome acts offended numerous younger deities and her outnumbered devotees were

CEGILUNE

Lesser Deity (Neutral Evil)

Once a beautiful and powerful goddess of the moon, spurned Cegilune tenaciously retains her divinity seemingly only to take revenge against the countless mortal races she believes betrayed her. Collecting larvae, the soul currency of the Lower Planes, Cegilune uses their profane magic to empower her hag servants and create new nightmarish monstrosities to infest the Material Plane. Cegilune's symbol is an overflowing black cauldron.

Portfolio: Hags, larvae, the moon

Domains: Evil, Knowledge, Moon*

Favored Weapon: Quarterstaff

Worship: Cegilune's only places of worship are small grisly shrines kept near the cauldrons and meal places of her devotees. Every night worshipers offer lengthy praises of their goddess's virtues and curses on all who betrayed her. These profanities escalate on the night of the full moon nearest the winter solstice when Cegilune's follower's perform torturous sacrifices, each seeking to dedicate the greatest suffering to her name.

Herald and Allies: Cegilune's herald is a gigantic larvae with the same statistics as a 20 HD fiendish purple worm. Mindless and bred only to exact its mistresses' wrath, the monstrosity is a bloated, trashing thing of sickly yellow flesh, with a corpulent humanoid face nearly lost amid its titanic rolls. The horror has no other name than that which Cegilune calls it—Ambrosial.

Clerics of Cegilune most often contact night hags with their *planar ally* spells.

*See the *Spell Compendium*.

cut down and driven into the shadowed reaches of the world. In addition, her divine tantrums had expended much of her remaining power, devastating her failing beauty and leaving her a weakened, monstrous crone, who too fled to the darkest, loneliest pits of existence.

With the departure of their goddess, the surviving daughters of Cegilune found their divine blessings corrupted and their hearts infused with their patroness's hatred. Thus, the voices, prophets, and protectors of Cegilune

became the first green hags, sea hags, and annis hags.

Today, the daughters of Cegilune, hags of all types, still strive to wreak their mother's dark will and bring suffering to all the treacherous mortal races. As for Cegilune, from her desolate home at the bottom of the multiverse, a pit in the Gray Wastes known as Hag's End, she fosters her remaining powers while seeking ways to bring ruin upon all mortal races and the imposter deities of the night.

PHYSIOLOGY OF THE ANNIS HAG

While most perceive hags as nothing more than vicious wart-skinned beldames, merely one disgusted glance at an annis hag forces reconsideration. Easily the most physically menacing subspecies of hag, annis hags loom more than 8 feet tall, their scabbed and blemished blue skins stretched over obscenely powerful frames of jutting bone and knotty muscle. The flesh of these withered forms holds more akin to leather armor than the supple skins of most humanoid races, being capable of turning aside blades with ease. Only blunted weapons, capable of smashing down an annis hag's tenacious frame, are assured to do any harm. Such implies, however, that one can bypass these monstrosities' potent and unnatural offenses.

Often measuring upward of 3 inches long, an annis hag's nails are formed of actual iron that magically extends from their bodies just as keratin nails develop from a normal humanoid's fingertips. As an annis hag ages, her nails continue to grow, often replacing bits that have been filed away by battle, rough use, and rust. Many annis hags—in a typical showing of vanity—take great pride in their nails, cultivating them into lengthy spirals that gradually become like rusted corkscrews. While such gross luxuriance neither aids nor hinders hags in combat, the sight of the creatures' sword-length nails and the cyclical wounds they gouge can prove most disconcerting.

Also marking annis hags apart from their hag sisters are these creatures' vestigial horns. Little longer than a human's thumbs, these curved,

blackened nubs arch upward from the forehead and possess neither the length nor durability to serve as weapons. Although these horns' purposes are unknown, some scholars suggest these protrusions—along with their blue skin—mark a link between annis hags and the planes-hunting night hag or, alternatively, cunning ogre mages. Whether these similarities imply that annis hags are progenitors or scions of such terrifying beings, though, remains widely contested.

PSYCHOLOGY OF THE ANNIS HAG

All hags possess powerful egos, but even among hags none prove more vainglorious than annis. Holding their size and strength as proof of their superiority, annis hags are quick to subjugate weaker creatures, especially other hags. Eager to have their perverse virtues acknowledged, they delight in manipulating bands of savage humanoids—the stronger the race, the greater their delight in subjugating them.

Annis hags show no more generosity toward their sisters than they do their minions. Ever eager to increase their powers, dominant annis hags physically subjugate weaker hags to form coveys, maintaining such groups through intimidation and violence. Their characteristic vanity and natural bitterness make groups with two or more annis hags exceedingly rare. Those that do exist often survive only through the extreme canniness or deception of another hag or as temporary arrangements. In the end, most alliances between annis hags end in bloody betrayal.

Exploring every imagined avenue to increase their power and fearsomeness, annis hags frequently augment themselves, either magically or physically. Deep scarification, bodily modification, magical enhancement, and grafting are all commonalities among these crones. One annis, known as Smiling Rut, was known for having gnawed through her own cheeks to give herself an obscene, gangrenous grin. Some go on to say that Smiling Rut was in fact an entire covey,



with the powerful annis hag having stitched her ever-flailing, semiconscious sisters upon her back.

Despite their self-superiority, annis hags prove most likely to acknowledge greater powers than themselves, especially when doing so promises to benefit them. As such, these hags are quick to appeal to potentially sympathetic powers such as bitter Cegilune, ancient Baba Yaga, the archdevil known as the Hag Countess, or any number of other dark deities.

While just as intelligent as green hags, annis hags' obsessions with physical strength and personal power lead many to perceive them as mere savages. In battle, such assumptions often prove fatal as these hags use their innate abilities to disguise their forms and create clouds of fog to disorient opponents who might otherwise be able to defeat them. Their need to possess undisputed strength within the territories they claim—usually an entire bog or forest surrounding their ruin or cavernous lairs—often leads them to perform feats of blatant savagery other hags would never dare. The annis hag called the Welt Mother once rampaged through three settlements bordering her moor, killing all the female young merely on the suspicion that another hag had seeded her changeling—potentially a future threat—among the villagers.

THE CHANGE: ABERRANT ADOLESCENCE

With no male members of their species, hags prey upon males of other humanoid races to propagate. Upon giving birth, a hag mother seeks out suitable parents of the father's race and replaces their child with her seemingly normal seed.

A hag's spawn—often called a changeling in folktales—appears beautiful, healthy, and strong, the kind of infant parents pray for. As the child ages, though, her true nature begins to impose upon her personality. Yet even these selfish and bullying tendencies never seem so outlandish as to mark the young hag as anything other than a brutish member of her foster parent's race. In fact, even the changeling herself has no inkling of her true nature.

For the first forty years of her life, a juvenile hag blends in with her adopted culture. Most live unextraordinary lives, marked only by predilections toward the traits and habits of the hags they'll one day become. Swarthy, physically powerful, and aggressive, young annis typically seek out work as warriors, even adventurers. Juvenile green hags often become graceful beauties, but their attractiveness is marred by their prima donna vanities. Young sea hags tend to be hale, plain women with poisoned tongues.

As these unsuspecting hags age their hateful personalities grow worse, beginning to manifest in their mid-forties as terrible physical alterations. This transformation, known to hags as "the change," culminates in the young hag's rebirth as a true hag of the same subspecies as her true mother.

Hags frequently use such tactics of spreading suffering by targeting the weakest members of a community, both the eldest and youngest, as such losses often prove the most painful. For example, the tragedy at Hobb's End is widely thought to have been orchestrated by a sorcerous hag haunting the nearby swamp. That grim morning the townsfolk woke to find their children replaced by crudely carved, child-sized manikins, each

missing a limb, several digits, or other vital part. Despite much searching and the villager's many prayers, though, the children were never seen again.

POWERS OF THE COVEY: HAG BREWS

As much a part of hag mythology as cruel coveys and grotesque hag eyes are these creatures' terrible cauldrons and the foul concoctions that bubble and writhe within. Part dark ritual, part cannibalistic feast, what screams and

ferments within these grotesque pools is more than just mad alchemy, but a form of magical creation that only hags are depraved enough to exploit. The corrupt hag brews that spill forth from these crones' cauldrons can wreak powerful magical effects, but often do so at a terrible price.

Formulating a hag brew is a process much like creating a hag eye. Instead of creating such a gem, a covey that meets the proper requirements (noted with each individual brew) can produce one hag brew a month on the night of the full moon. Every hag brew requires the sacrifice of a sentient creature, a number of other grotesque ingredients, and a two-hour-long ritual taking place in the hours before and after midnight. The hags creating the brew must remain

within 10 feet of each other and can perform no other action for the duration of the rite. Leaving the area or being distracted from the ceremony ruins the brew, the creation of which cannot be attempted for another month. A covey also cannot use their covey-related spell-like abilities the day after creating a brew, as this magic is expended by the brew's creation. Coveys that create a hag brew cannot create a hag eye in the same month.

An example hag brew is presented here, but more can be found online at paizo.com/dragon as part of the preview for this issue.

BREW OF BLACK EYES

Infused with a sliver of hag tongue, a creature that drinks of this thick black brew gains the effects of *arcane*

sight, *darkvision*, and *see invisibility* for 1 week. For the duration of the brew, however, the drinker is afflicted by terrible nightmares of the hags that created the concoction, preventing him from getting a restful sleep, thus leaving him fatigued and unable to regain arcane spells. During these nightmares the hags and the drinker can communicate as per the spell *Rary's telepathic bond*, although the drinker has no choice but to participate in the communication. The effects of this brew can be ended early by *remove curse*. Hags most often bestow this brew upon minions tasked to hunt down specific enemies or magic items.

Moderate divination; a covey consisting of hags of three different types; Weight —. ■

ADVANCED ANNIS HAG

All hags advance by taking class levels. Advanced annis hags regularly take levels of barbarian or fighter, but they are also likely to take levels as clerics of evil and savage deities.

Within the chill depths of the Frostrot Marsh, the annis hag Black Agga has usurped control of the unorganized trolls of the Gut Gnaw tribe. Half-crazed with savagery, the hag claimed the oversized claw of the trolls' gigantic former king and grafted it onto her own. She now rules as a cannibal queen, leading her eager minions to raid the surrounding lands, dragging live prey screaming back into their dark bog.

BLACK AGGA

CR 16

Female annis hag barbarian 8
CE Large monstrous humanoid
Init +1; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +12, Spot +12
Language Abyssal, Common, Giant,

AC 27, touch 10, flat-footed 26; improved
uncanny dodge

hp 145 (15 HD); DR 2/bludgeoning, 1/—
SR 19

Fort +17, Ref +8, Will +7

Spd 50 ft. (10 squares)

Melee rending claw*
+26 melee (1d8+12/x3)
and claw +24 melee
(1d6+10) and
bite +19 melee
(1d6+5)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

Base Atk +15; Grp +29

Attack Options Awesome Blow, Power Attack, improved grab,
rake 1d8+12, rend 1d8+1d6+18

Special Actions rage 2/day

Combat Gear *potion of fly*, *potion of haste*, *potion of resist fire* 20,
potion of nondetection

Spell-like Abilities (CL 8th):

3/day—*disguise self*, *fog cloud*

Abilities Str 30, Dex 12, Con 19, Int 15, Wis 10, Cha 12

SQ trap sense +2

Feats Alertness, Awesome Blow, Blind-Fight, Great Fortitude,
Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack

Skills Bluff +9, Diplomacy +7, Disguise +9 (+2 acting), Hide +13,
Intimidate +17, Jump +14, Knowledge (nature) +8, Listen +12,
Spot +12, Survival +10 (+2 above ground), Swim +16

Possessions rending claw graft, *bracers of armor* +5

Rage (Ex) When Black Agga rages, her statistics change as
follows:

AC 25, touch 8, flat-footed 24

hp 166

Fort +19 Will +9

Melee rending claw* +28 melee (1d8+14/x3) and
claw +26 melee (1d6+12) and
bite +21 melee (1d6+6)

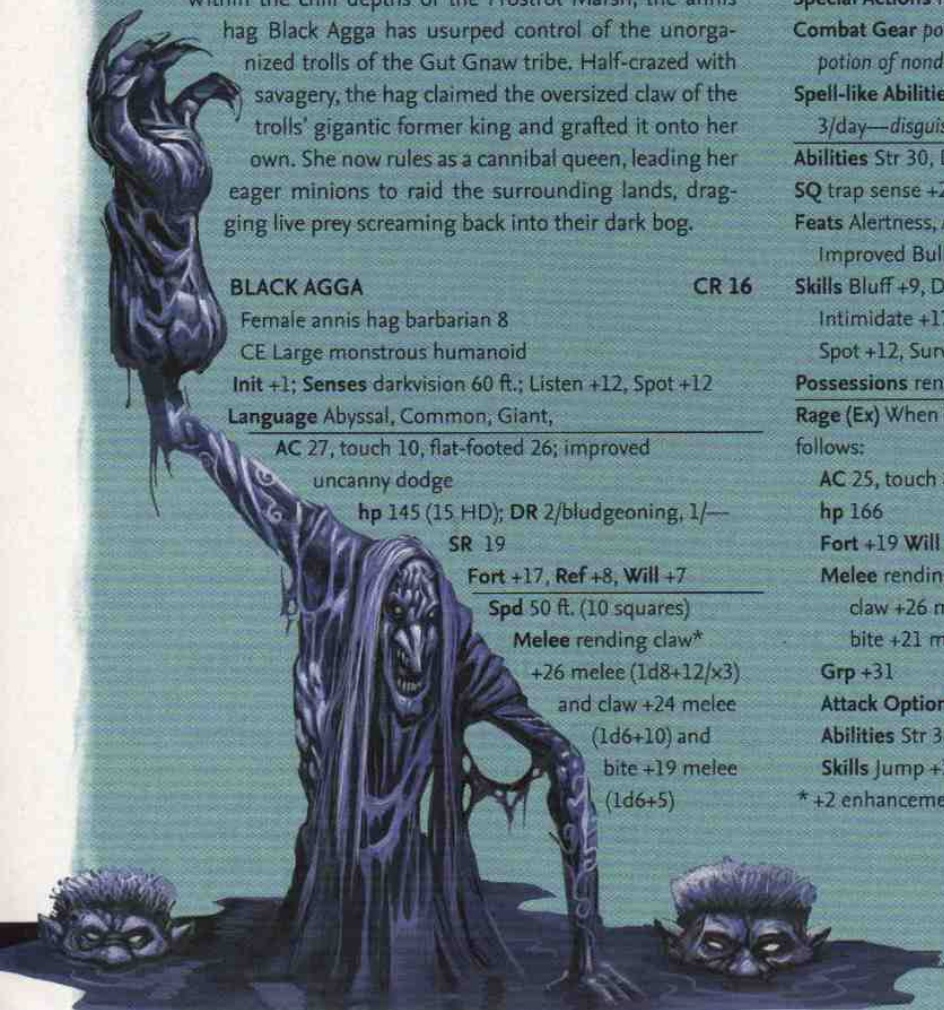
Grp +31

Attack Options rake 1d8+14, rend 1d6+1d8+20

Abilities Str 38, Con 23

Skills Jump +14, Swim +18

*+2 enhancement from permanent *greater magic fang*.



FOR AND AGAINST THE GIANTS

Those who hunt giants do well to study their foes beforehand. Many tales and legends surround giants and their mysterious powers and dark pasts.

One of the most recently unearthed legends involves the wicked and beautiful frost giant queen, Brynja Skjaldvör, and the small band who defeated her and took from her magic items of particular splendor and beauty. These stories tell of a pair of survivors: Thordrick the swordsman, who carried the original *sword of giant rending*, and his companion, the mysterious necromancer Elgrim, bearer of the first *Hel's death staff*.

These legendary items, as well as other unique relics brought out of the lands of the giants, have outlived their famed bearers. Many have been duplicated by arcanists and artificers, and these copies now spread far and wide across the vast world.

CLOUD GIANT HARP

You can play a soothing melody on this harp that puts creatures to sleep. The harp is of particular use against giants.

Description: A *cloud giant harp* is wrought of fine golden wood, inset with brilliant jewels, and etched with intricate designs. The column of the harp is crafted to resemble the face of a regal cloud giantess face. The harp stands about 4 feet tall and makes for a wonderful handheld instrument for giants. Smaller folk are typically surprised that, despite its thick wood construction, the harp is as light as a feather. The harp emits beautiful angelic music when played, and in the case of sen-



tient versions, the giant effigy even sings in glorious harmony along with the plucked strings.

Activation: You can play the harp as a standard action, but must succeed at either a DC 15 or a DC 20 Perform (string instruments) check for its magic to function. This check can be made once per day, whether or not it succeeds.

Effect: When you succeed at a DC 15 Perform (string instruments) check, you play a soothing melody that puts up to 10 HD of humanoids within 30 feet of you to sleep (as per *deep slumber*) unless they succeed at DC 14 Will saves. You can affect up to 20 HD of giants with this harp, but you must succeed at a DC 20 Perform (string instruments) check to do so. If you fail to make a DC 20 check but succeed at a DC 15 check, you may still affect up to 10 HD of creatures.

Aura/Caster Level: Faint enchantment, CL 5th.

Construction: Craft Wondrous Item, *deep slumber*, 2,430 gp, 194 XP, 5 days.

Variants: Sentient versions of *cloud giant harps* exist that are said to be elegant speakers and singers. Extremely fond of their original cloud giant creators, these harps consider giants the greatest of all beings and superior to those of lesser stature. These harps still obey most of their masters' commands but only after voicing their displeasure and embarrassment at being "used by such an inferior creature."

Weight: —

Price: 4,860 gp.

HEL'S DEATH STAFF

This staff harnesses necromantic power, the effects of which are much more potent against giants.

Description: This staff is crafted from a stone giant's femur, with the ball joint's rounded, polished protrusions gleaming on the top end of the staff and the bottom sharpened to a point. A fetish necklace of giant's teeth hangs from a hole carved through the top. The deep gray length of the staff is etched with mystical runes, each painted blood red.

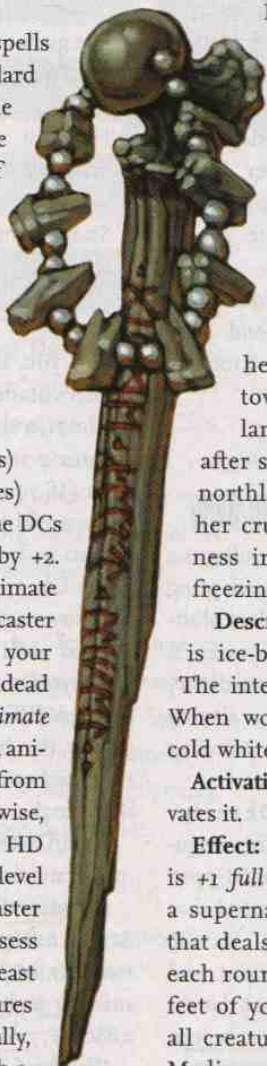
When activated, *Hel's death staff* emits a stench of decay and absorbs the light around the staff's head, creating an empty black sphere of shadowy illumination that darkens about as much as a candle brightens. This has no game effect.

Activation: Each of the spells below require a standard action to activate, with one exception: You can animate giants killed with the staff as a swift action.

Effect: A *Hel's death staff* allows use of the following spells:

- *Blindness/deafness* (1 charge)
- *Ray of enfeeblement* (1 charge)
- *Animate dead* (2 charges)
- *Finger of death* (3 charges)

When cast on a giant, the DCs of these spells increase by +2. Additionally, you can animate up to three times your caster level (instead of twice your caster level) of HD of undead with a single casting of *animate dead*. All of the undead you animate in this way must be from the bodies of giants. Likewise, you can control up to 6 HD of undead per caster level (instead of 4 HD per caster level) as long as you possess *Hel's death staff* and at least one of the undead creatures you control is a giant. Finally, when you slay a giant with a *finger of death* spell cast from



the staff, you can opt to immediately (as a swift action) animate the giant's body with *animate dead*. This use requires the expenditure of only a single charge from the staff for casting *animate dead* (instead of the normal 2 charges).

Aura/Caster Level: Strong Necromancy, CL 13th.

Construction: Craft Staff, *animate dead*, *blindness/deafness*, *finger of death*, *ray of enfeeblement*, 29,655 gp, 2,372 XP, 60 days.

Weight: 4 lb.

Price: 59,310 gp.

ICE ARMOR OF THE NORTHLANDS

Ice armor of the northlands wreathes you in a supernatural icy mist that deals cold damage to nearby creatures.

Lore: A DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) or Knowledge (history) check provides the following information.

Brynja Skjaldvör, the infamous frost giantess, crafted the first *ice armor of the northlands* for herself, jealously guarding the secret of its creation. With her fearsome warbands in tow she scourged the northlands, conquering settlement after settlement. The bards of the northlands sing forlorn tales of her cruelty, noting her ferociousness in battle and her legendary freezing armor.

Description: This full plate armor is ice-blue and shrouded in frost. The interior is lined with thick fur. When worn, it exudes an extremely cold white mist.

Activation: Donning the armor activates it.

Effect: *Ice armor of the northlands* is +1 full plate that wreathes you in a supernatural icy mist at all times that deals 2d6 points of cold damage each round to all creatures within 10 feet of you (if Large or larger) or to all creatures within 5 feet of you (if Medium or smaller). The armor deals the same damage to you each round.



Aura/Caster Level: Moderate evocation, CL 7th.

Construction: Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *fire shield*, 30,650 gp, 2,240 XP, 56 days.

Variants: Fire giants have also realized the potential for this armor, and thus variants that wreath the wearer in flames and deal fire damage instead of cold damage exist.

Characters can resize Large armor to fit a Medium wearer by succeeding at a DC 20 Craft (armorsmithing) check.

Weight: 100 lb. (Large) or 50 lb. (Medium).

Price: 58,650 gp.

RINGS OF THE FROST GIANT JARL

A *ring of the frost giant jarl* allows you to summon winter wolves. Additionally, if you wear two at once, the rings grant you a freezing breath attack.

Lore: A DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) or Knowledge (history) check reveals the following information. Brynja Skjaldvör, a beautiful and powerful frost giantess, created the first *rings of the frost giant jarl*. Brynja's own rings are said to be items of legendary power.

Description: These thick silver rings fit well on the fingers of Large giants but resize for Medium wearers. A *ring of the frost giant jarl* bears an etching of a snarling winter wolf that appears ready to battle.

When you activate a ring (for either of its two uses) it exudes a harmless icy mist that fills your square and the squares where the winter wolves are being summoned for 1 round. This mist is not thick enough to provide you with concealment of any kind. If you use the ring for summoning, the mist reveals a snarling winter wolf when it clears, awaiting your command. The winter wolf is found on page 256 of the *Monster Manual*.

Activation: Once per day as a standard action, you can utter the command words (the names of the winter wolves the rings summon—common names are Medvyed, Varuna, and Zabava) to summon a single winter wolf, who serves you for 9 rounds. If you wear two *rings of the frost giant jarl* you can instead utter the com-

mand words as a full-round action once per day to summon two winter wolves, who serve you for 9 rounds. Additionally, if you wear two rings you can, once per day, rub the rings together as a free action to gain a freezing breath attack.

Effects: You can summon a single winter wolf with a *ring of the frost giant jarl* as a standard action. If you wear two rings, you can instead summon two winter wolves simultaneously as a full-round action (you can still summon the wolves separately if you wish). The winter wolves appear where you designate within 60 feet and act immediately on your turn.

If you wear two *rings of the frost giant jarl*, you can also spew a 60-foot cone of freezing breath. This breath weapon deals 9d6 points of cold damage to all within its area of effect. Creatures within the cone are allowed a DC 17 Reflex save to take only half damage.

Aura/Caster Level: Moderate conjuration and moderate evocation, CL 9th.

Construction: Forge Ring, cone of cold, summon monster V, 8,100 gp, 648 XP, 16 days.

Weight: —

Price: 22,200 gp.

SWORD OF GIANT RENDING

A *sword of giant rending* is a versatile weapon, adapting to its foes and exploiting their weaknesses. It gains extraordinary powers by slaying giants and removing their hearts.

Description: This angular, blunt-tipped bastard sword has

a jagged blade. Its tip glows with a faint and ghostly flame that dances as if touched by a breeze, changing its color as if on a whim. When used to strike

a giant the sword erupts in colorful explosions of energy.

Activation: A *sword of giant rending* is activated by wielding it in combat. When you attack a giant, it gains additional powers.

Effect: A *sword of giant rending* is a +2 giant bane bastard sword. When you succeed at an attack against a giant, the sword deals an additional amount of damage, the type of which depends on the kind of giant struck. Consult the following table to determine which special ability the sword possesses:

Giant Kind	Special Ability	Greater Special Ability
Cloud giant	shock	shocking burst
Fire giant	frost	icy burst
Frost giant	flaming	flaming burst
Hill giant	lawful	axiomatic
Stone giant	shock	shocking burst
Storm giant	lawful	axiomatic
Other	wielder's choice	—

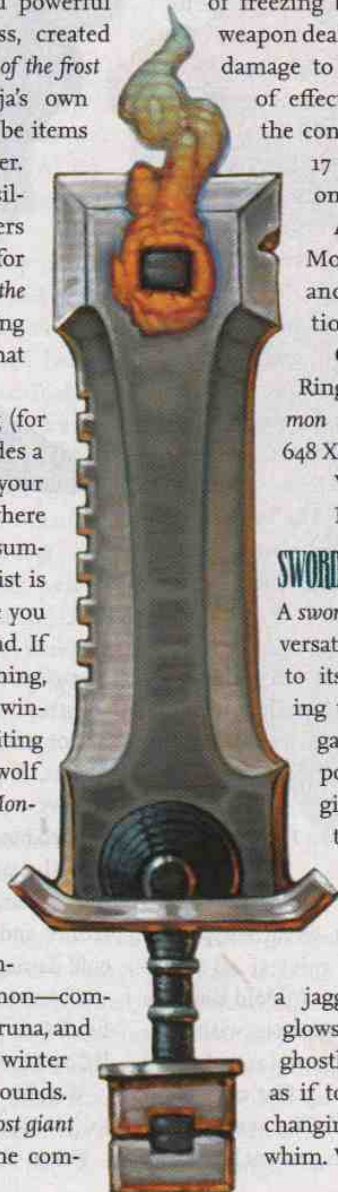
When you kill a giant and use this sword's blade to ritualistically remove its heart, a *sword of giant rending* gains greater power. This ritual requires 1 hour. If you remove three hearts of the same kind of giant in this manner within 24 hours, the blade thereafter gains the appropriate special ability. The *sword of giant rending* retains the special ability granted by the ritual until you perform three more rituals on a different kind of giant, which grants the blade a new special ability based on the kind of giant used in the ritual.

Aura/Caster Level: Strong evocation, moderate conjuration, CL 12th.

Construction: Craft Magic Arms and Armor, call lightning or lightning bolt, chill metal or ice storm, flame blade or flame strike or fireball, order's wrath, 36,335 gp, 2,880 XP, 72 days.

Weight: 6 lb.

Price: 72,335 gp. ■





Artifact Spells

Magic of the Giants

by Jason Bulmahn

illustrated by Attila Adorjany

In a time before modern reckoning, the giants of Xen'drik wielded magical power undreamt of by modern spellcasters. Their spells defeated a quori invasion, laid waste to vast portions of the continent, and eventually led to the downfall of an empire. In **EBERRON**, these incredibly powerful spells represent a pinnacle of power not seen since the time of the giants. Yet traces of these artifact spells remain, scribed on ancient stone walls and mentioned in forgotten tales. Only recently have modern spellcasters begun to understand the full meaning of these ancient formulas and even taken the first steps toward recreating these powers.

CASTING ARTIFACT SPELLS

Artifact spells are a new and powerful form of magic detailed in the newly released exploration of **EBERRON**'s dark continent, *Secrets of Xen'drik*. These rare magical formulas are far more complex than normal spells and as such require use of the following supplementary rules.

Anyone capable of casting a spell of the proper level and type (arcane or divine) can learn to cast an artifact spell. Although artifact spells must be studied like any other, they are too complex and difficult to fully comprehend, and so they cannot be added to a caster's normal repertoire. Those who study one of these spells gain the ability to prepare or spontaneously cast the spell only once.

A spellcaster must study the appropriate runes and formulas for 1d4 hours and succeed on a Spellcraft check (DC 15 + twice the spell's level) in order to comprehend an artifact spell. A failed check can be repeated in 24 hours. A character cannot take 10 on this check.

Once an artifact spell has been learned, a character can cast the spell once during the next year. If it is not cast within one year, the spell fades and is lost. A character who prepares spells can prepare an artifact spell in an appropriate slot. If the artifact spell is not cast (if its spell slot is used for some other purpose, for example), it can be prepared again at a later date within the year. A character who casts spells spontaneously can simply cast the artifact spell using a spell slot of the appropriate level. Because an artifact spell is learned only temporarily, it does not replace one of a spontaneous caster's known spells.

Artifact spells never have a material component or an arcane focus, though divine artifact spells might have a divine focus. An artifact spell can't be modified by any metamagic feat or effect. An artifact spell cannot be made into a potion, scroll, or other magic item.

A caster cannot possess the ability to cast a given artifact spell more than once, although once cast (or if lost after a year has passed), the spell can be renewed if the ancient source is studied again. Artifact spells are always scribed on some large, immovable object, such as an immense stone wall, or inscribed on the facets of a towering crystal pillar. As such, they cannot be transported and are far too complex to translate into written form or copy as rubbings. Those wishing to learn an artifact spell must travel to its ancient resting place and learn from the source.

ARTIFACT SPELLS

Only a small number of artifact spells have thus far been discovered within the depths of Xen'drik. If you wish to use artifact spells in a campaign set outside of Eberron, similar magic might be attributed to any ancient race known for their magical mastery. For example, in the *Forgotten Realms*, artifact spells might be relics of Netheril or the cruel phaerimm, while in *Greyhawk*, such magic might have been used by the Suel and Baklunish empires during the time of the Twin Cataclysms.

The spells presented here supplement those found in *Secrets of Xen'drik*.

DISJOIN POSSESSION

Abjuration

Level: Divine 3

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Medium (400 ft. + 40 ft./level)

Area: 50-ft.-radius spread

Duration: Instantaneous (1 hour/level); see text

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

A wave of crackling blue energy spreads out from a point you designate, causing all possessing spirits within range to be immediately expelled from their host bodies. This includes demonic possession, quori possession, a ghost's malevolence ability, *magic jar*, and other similar possession effects. A successful Will save prevents the expulsion.

In addition, every creature within the area of effect is protected from any attempt to possess the warded creature (by a *magic jar* attack, for example) or to exercise mental control over the creature (including enchantment [charm] effects and enchantment [compulsion] effects that grant the caster ongoing control over the subject, such as *dominate person*) for 1 hour per level of the caster. Possessed creatures that avoid expulsion do not receive this protection.

ESKELIA'S SOUL CYCLONE

Evocation [Air] and Necromancy

Level: Arcane 6

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Long (400 ft. + 40 ft./level)

Effect: Cyclone 30 ft. wide at base, 80 ft. wide at top, and 100 ft. tall

Duration: 1 round/level (D)

Saving Throw: Reflex negates; see text

Spell Resistance: Yes

At a point you designate, a cyclone of howling souls springs into being, drawn forth from the afterlife. The cyclone moves across ground and water at a speed of 100 feet per round. You can concentrate on controlling the cyclone's every movement or specify a simple program. Directing the cyclone's movement or changing its programmed movement is a standard action for you. The cyclone always moves during your turn. If the cyclone exceeds the spell's range, it moves in a random, uncontrolled fashion for 1d3 rounds and then dissipates. (You can't regain control of the cyclone, even if it comes back within range.)

Any Huge or smaller creature that comes in contact with the spell effect must succeed on a Reflex save or gain 1 negative level. A Large or smaller creature that fails its first save must succeed on a second one or be picked up bodily by the cyclone and held suspended in its powerful winds, gaining 1 negative level each round on your turn. A successful Fortitude save made each round avoids this negative level. You may direct the cyclone to eject any carried creatures whenever you wish, depositing the hapless souls wherever the cyclone happens to be when they are released.

HIBYRNTIC'S CURSE

Conjuration and Evocation [Cold]

Level: Divine 4

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Target: One creature

Duration: 1 round/level

Saving Throw: Fortitude partial

Spell Resistance: No

As you cast this spell, designate one creature within range. That creature is covered in a rime of deadly chilling ice for the duration. This ice has a number of effects. First, it deals 4d6 points of cold damage each round that it persists. In addition, the creature can take only a single move action or standard action each turn, but not both, and the creature moves at half speed. Each round, the target gets to make a Fortitude save against this spell. If successful, the damage is halved and the creature is not slowed in any way. If the creature fails two such Fortitude saves in a row, it becomes encased in ice, can take no further actions, and automatically fails all future Fortitude saves to avoid this effect.

An encased creature can take no actions, but those adjacent can attempt a DC 25 Strength check to break the target free of the ice. Dealing 20 or more points of damage in a single attack also frees the creature, but any damage in excess of 20 points is applied to the target, who is automatically hit and does not receive a save against the effect, although SR still applies. Fire damage deals 150% normal damage to a creature encased in ice. Acid deals one-quarter normal damage, while electricity and sonic effects deal full damage. Cold damage has no effect on a creature encased in ice. Once free, the target must begin making saves again.

LIFE SPRING

Conjuration (Healing)

Level: Divine 6

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Touch

Target: Dead creature touched

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: None; see text

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

You restore life to a dead creature, healing it completely. You can raise a creature that has been dead for no longer than 1 hour per caster level. In addition, the subject's soul must be free and willing to return. If the subject's soul is not willing to return, the spell does not work; a subject that

wants to return receives no saving throw.

A creature restored to life by this spell does not lose a level, but is stunned for 1d6 rounds.

This spell also heals the creature of all hit point and ability damage. Normal poison and normal disease are cured in the process of raising the subject, but magical diseases and curses are not undone. While the spell closes mortal wounds and repairs lethal damage of most kinds, the body of the creature must be whole. Otherwise, missing parts are still missing when the creature is brought back to life. None of the dead creature's equipment or possessions are affected in any way by this spell.

This spell can restore a creature who has been turned into an undead creature or killed by a death effect. The spell cannot bring back a creature that has died of old age.

TELEPATHIC STRIKE

Divination and Enchantment [Mind-Affecting]

Level: Arcane 3

Components: V

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: See text

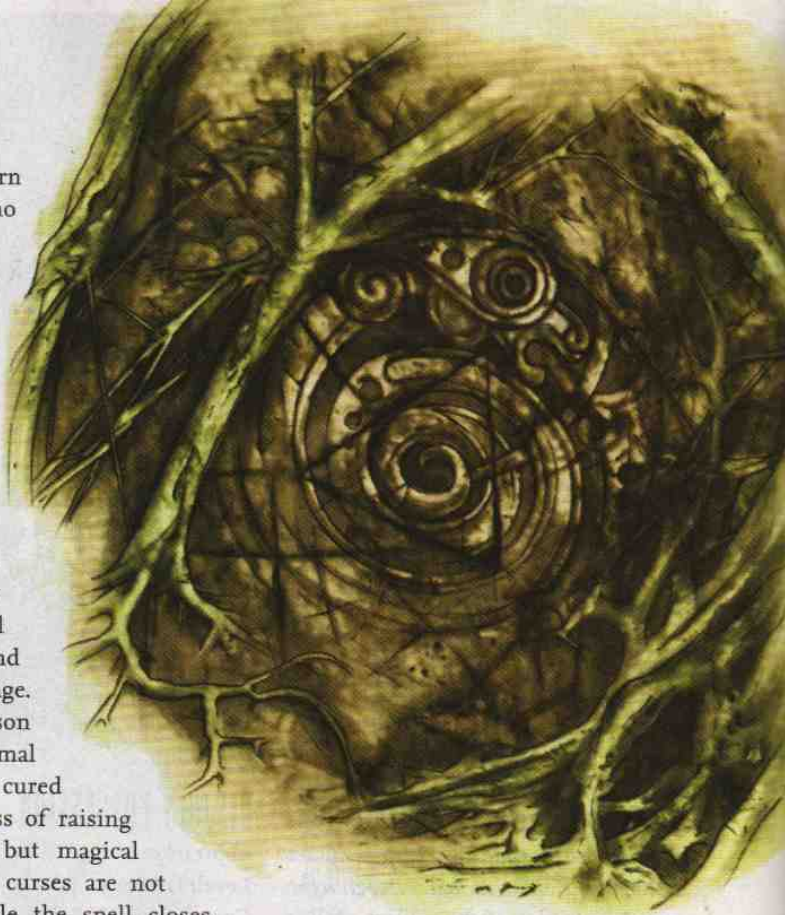
Target: One living creature; see text

Duration: 1 round/level

Saving Throw: Will negates; see text

Spell Resistance: Yes

When casting this spell, you name a specific creature to scry upon. For the duration of the spell, you see and hear through that creature's eyes and ears using all the natural senses



available to the target. For example, if the creature possesses darkvision, you can see using that ability while looking through its eyes. This spell does not allow you to take advantage of magical senses possessed by the target, such as *detect magic*, *tongues*, and *true seeing*. A successful Will save negates this effect and ends the spell immediately.

Once per casting of this spell, you can choose to lash out at a single target with a devastating telepathic wave. The target of this wave must be within line of sight of the creature whose senses you see through (which includes the original creature). The target of this wave takes 1d6 points of Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma damage and is stunned for 1 round. A successful Will save halves the damage and negates the stunning effect. If used to target the original creature, that creature does not receive a saving throw to halve this damage and is automatically stunned.

The targets of this spell must be on the same plane as the caster. This spell is negated by spells and effects that block scrying. ■

by Andy Collins • illustrated by Andrew Hou

OFFICIAL ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS

This month, the Sage answers a variety of questions dealing with standard classes and class features. If you have questions for the Sage, send them to sageadvice@paizo.com.



The barbarian's fast movement does not list a bonus type. Is it meant to stack with other movement-increasing effects?

Yes. The barbarian's increase to speed is an untyped bonus, and thus stacks with all other effects that improve speed.

Does a raging barbarian lose the effects of his rage (including the extra hit points from his increased Constitution) when he falls unconscious?

No. Nothing in the rage class feature indicates that the effect ends if the barbarian is rendered unconscious. The Sage shudders to think how many more dead barbarians would be lying around the battlefield if being reduced to -1 hp meant that the barbarian instantly lost additional hp equal to twice his HD!

As a general rule, activated effects remain active even if the activating character is rendered incapable of acting (paralyzed, unconscious, dead, and so on) unless the effect stipulates otherwise.

Does uncanny dodge protect a character from losing his Dexterity bonus to AC to a successful feint?

No. Uncanny dodge doesn't protect you from all situations that would deny you your Dexterity bonus to AC. It only lets you retain your Dexterity bonus if "caught flat-footed or struck by an invisible attacker." A feint doesn't render a target flat-footed, it just doesn't allow him to use his Dexterity bonus to AC against your next melee attack made on or before your next turn.

Can a cleric/wizard lose a prepared wizard spell to spontaneously cast a cure spell?

No. The cleric or druid's spontaneous casting option applies only to spells from the same class.

Does the +1 caster level bonus from such domains as Good, Knowledge, and Law apply to all spells (of the appropriate school, subschool, or descriptor), to divine spells, or only to cleric spells?

Unless the domain's granted power specifically states that it applies only to a limited range of spells, the bonus applies to all spells the cleric casts, regardless of their source.

Does a druid's trackless step ability function even when she's using wild shape? What about her other non-spellcasting class abilities, like woodland stride or resist nature's lure?

The recent errata to the druid's wild shape states that it functions like the alternate form special ability (*Monster Manual*, page 305), which asserts that the creature "retains the special qualities of its original form." Nature sense, trackless step, woodland stride, resist nature's lure, and venom immunity are all special qualities, so the druid would retain these even while wild shaped.

A druid with trackless step doesn't leave tracks. Is this because she doesn't exert any weight on the surface she walks on, and if so does this mean she

wouldn't break through thin ice or similar surfaces?

No. Trackless step only allows you to avoid being tracked—it doesn't have any other effect.

The Sage imagines this as the grass springing instantly back up after the druid lifts her foot away, or branches returning unbroken to their original position after being pushed aside.

How does a favored soul or other spontaneous divine spellcaster ready his spells for the day?

Unless stated otherwise in the class description, favored souls, shugenjas, and other purely spontaneous divine spellcasters ready spells each day just as sorcerers do, and they require 8 hours of rest beforehand and 15 minutes of concentration.

The spirit shaman's spellcasting entry (*Complete Divine*, page 16) states that the character needs only 1 hour of quiet meditation at a particular time each day to regain her spells (much like a cleric).

(This is a correction to an earlier Sage Advice answer, which erroneously stated that spirit shamans required rest to ready their spells.)

Does the favored soul's resistance to energy class feature stack with resistance to energy gained as a racial trait?

No. Resistance to energy from multiple sources doesn't stack—it's simply a set value. A 5th-level aasimar favored

soul who chooses resistance to acid would have resistance to acid 10 from his class levels and resistance to acid 5 from his race, so he'd use the higher value.

It's theoretically possible for a special ability (whether from a class, race, or other source) to improve a character's existing resistance to energy, but it would have to state that specifically as the effect.

Can a monk treat an attack with a gauntlet as an unarmed strike?

A monk could wear such an item and treat it as an unarmed strike (since the *Player's Handbook* says that "a strike with a gauntlet is... considered an unarmed attack"), although the damage dealt by the gauntlet would always be considered lethal damage (as noted in the gauntlet entry) and the monk would suffer nonproficiency penalty (since the gauntlet is a simple weapon). The monk could even use gauntlet attacks as part of a flurry of blows.

If a creature with multiple natural attacks (such as the standard two claws and a bite array) takes levels of monk, how do flurry of blows and its natural attack progression interact?

You can't use a natural weapon (claw, bite, or whatever) as part of a flurry of blows—only unarmed strikes and special monk weapons may be used in a flurry of blows.

If a creature can use one of its natural weapons as a secondary attack in conjunction with manufactured weapon attacks, it may do the same with that natural weapon in conjunction with a flurry of blows. Any penalty assessed on attacks by the flurry of blows would also apply to the natural weapon attack.

For example, a typical lizardfolk can attack with a club and its bite as part of a full attack. Normally, a creature would take a -5 penalty on an attack roll made with a secondary weapon, but since the lizardfolk has Multiattack, the penalty on the attack roll is reduced to -2 and adds only half the lizardfolk's Strength bonus on the damage roll.

If it were a 1st-level monk, it could make a flurry of blows (using unarmed strikes, not claw attacks), then add a bite attack as a secondary attack. Each unarmed strike would have a -2 penalty (from flurry of blows), and the bite attack would have a -4 penalty (-2 from flurry of blows and -2 from being a secondary weapon, reduced from -5 by Multiattack).

Does the monk's ki strike (magic) only allow her to overcome damage reduction or does it make her natural attacks count as magic weapons for all effects (such as affecting incorporeal opponents)?

The *Player's Handbook* states that ki strike affects the monk's unarmed strikes "for the purpose of dealing damage to creatures with damage reduction," but says nothing about any other effects. Thus, the monk's unarmed attacks aren't considered magic weapons for any other purpose, including affecting incorporeal foes.



Does the monk's spell resistance class feature stack with spell resistance gained as a racial trait?

No. Spell resistance from multiple sources doesn't stack—it's simply a set value. A 13th-level drow monk would have SR 23 from her monk levels and SR 24 from her drow race, so she'd use the higher value.

It's theoretically possible for a special ability (whether from a class, race, or other source) to improve a character's existing spell resistance, but it would have to state that specifically as the effect.

Can a good-aligned ninja use poison without violating her alignment? In other words, is using poison considered an evil act?

Nothing in the alignment information in the *Player's Handbook* or the poison entry in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* specifically describes the use of poison as an evil act. Of course, the purpose to which you put the poison might well be an evil act: using poison to murder the local constable is just as evil as knifing him in a back alley.

It's possible that using poison might violate a character's personal moral code, or the moral code of his faith or cause. For example, if local laws restrict the use of poison, its use would be considered an unlawful act, which would violate a paladin's code (which includes "respect [for] legitimate authority"). The DM is the ultimate arbiter of what is or isn't legal in his campaign.

Remember, a character's alignment isn't a set of rules to follow—it's a player's declaration of an intent to play a character a certain way. Declaring your ninja is lawful good doesn't mean she can't act in a manner considered either unlawful or evil (or both). Repeated behavior of this sort can and should be construed as a decision on your part that your character's actual alignment—that is, the way you've chosen to play the character—doesn't match her stated alignment. In this case, the DM is

fully within his rights to suggest or even impose an alignment change on your character. For most characters, this has minimal mechanical impact, although some classes impose alignment restrictions.

Does a paladin turning undead use his paladin level or his turning level (three below his paladin level) to see if he destroys undead?

For all effects related to turning, a paladin is treated as a cleric of three levels lower than her paladin level. To destroy a 2-HD zombie with a turn undead attempt, a paladin must be at least 7th level (and thus effectively a 4th-level cleric).

Can a rogue with skill mastery take 10 on a Use Magic Device check?

No. The rogue's skill mastery class feature states that "she may take 10 even if stress and distractions would normally prevent her from doing so." This only applies to skills that allow a character to take 10 in nonstressful situations; if a skill simply doesn't allow a character to take 10 under any circumstances (such as Use Magic Device), skill mastery provides no benefit.

Does a rogue apply sneak attack damage when throwing alchemist fire or casting a spell like *acid splash*?

Yes. The bonus damage from sneak attack, skirmish, or sudden strike applies to any attack that requires an attack roll, even touch attacks.

If my character gains evasion from two different classes, does he now have improved evasion?

No. A rogue 2/monk 2 has evasion from two different sources, but does not have improved evasion.

A scout has trapfinding but not Disable Device as a class skill. Was this intentional?

The errata to *Complete Adventurer* (found at wizards.com/default.asp?x=dnd/er/20040125a) indicates that Disable Device should be considered a class skill for the scout. ■

Dragon

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EQUIPMENT ARRAYS

Equipment arrays help simplify character sheets and reduce the need for precise bookkeeping. Instead of writing down all the mundane equipment, simply write in the name of the array, figure the cost and encumbrance, and use this article as a reference sheet.

All of these items can be found in the *Player's Handbook*. *Complete Adventurer* and *Arms and Equipment Guide* also have useful items for especially tough missions.

HEALING ARRAY

Those with limited or no access to magical healing often find these items useful. They represent the tools typically carried by professional healers and battlefield medics.

Item	Cost	Weight
Antitoxin (vial)	50 gp	—
Backpack	2 gp	2 lb.
Bedroll	1 sp	5 lb.
Bell	1 gp	—
Candles (2)	1 cp	—
Cleric's vestments	5 gp	6 lb.
Healer's kit	50 gp	1 lb.
Holy water (flask)	25 gp	1 lb.
Mugs (5)	1 sp	5 lb.
Rations (4 days)	2 gp	4 lb.
Sewing needle	5 sp	—
Soap	5 sp	1 lb.
Wine, fine bottles (2)	20 gp	3 lb.
Total	156 gp, 2 sp, 1 cp	28 lb.

INFILTRATION ARRAY

These are the most common tools used to break into and out of fortified areas. An adventurer caught walking about after dark equipped with this array needs a good story to avoid time in the local jail.

Item	Cost	Weight
Acid (flask)	10 gp	1 lb.
Belt pouch (2)	1 gp	1 lb.
Block and tackle	5 gp	5 lb.
Caltrops	1 gp	2 lb.
Crowbar	2 gp	5 lb.
Explorer's outfit	10 gp	8 lb.
Grappling hook	1 gp	4 lb.
Lantern, bullseye	12 gp	3 lb.
Pole, 10-foot	2 sp	8 lb.
Rations (2 days)	1 gp	2 lb.
Signal whistle	8 sp	—
Silk rope (50 ft.)	10 gp	5 lb.
Sledge	1 gp	10 lb.
Thieves tools, masterwork	100 gp	1 lb.
Waterskin	1 gp	4 lb.
Total	156 gp	59 lb.



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MERCHANT ARRAY

An adventurer who wishes to act as a reputable merchant, or one who merely wishes to track her acquisitions, does well to keep these items in stock.

Item	Cost	Weight
Belt pouch (2)	2 gp	1 lb.
Courtier's outfit	30 gp	6 lb.
Good lock	80 gp	1 lb.
Ink (1 oz. vial)	8 gp	—
Inkpen	1 sp	—
Magnifying glass	100 gp	—
Merchant's scale	2 gp	1 lb.
Paper (20 sheets)	8 gp	2 lb.
Scroll cases (4)	4 gp	2 lb.
Sealing wax	1 gp	1 lb.
Signet ring	5 gp	—
Small steel mirror	10 gp	—
Total	250 gp, 1 sp	14 lb.

MOUNTAINEERING ARRAY

These heavy supplies allow any single traveler to survive the cold conditions of an extended mountain climb for about two weeks, barring poor weather or unforeseen difficulties. *Frostburn* contains more helpful equipment.

Item	Cost	Weight
Backpack	2 gp	2 lb.
Belt pouch (2)	2 gp	1 lb.
Climbing kit	80 gp	5 lb.
Cold weather outfit	8 gp	7 lb.
Firewood (24 hours' worth)	1 cp	20 lb.
Flint and steel	1 gp	—
Hammer	5 sp	2 lb.
Pitons (30)	3 gp	15 lb.
Rations (2 weeks)	7 gp	14 lb.
Silk rope (100 ft.)	20 gp	10 lb.
Tent	10 gp	20 lb.
Waterskin	1 gp	4 lb.
Winter blanket	5 sp	3 lb.
Total	135 gp, 1 cp	103 lb.

RIDING ARRAY

These items provide an adventurer with all she needs to outfit a mount for an overland journey, as well as the bare supplies needed to make her comfortable.

Item	Cost	Weight
Bit and bridle	2 gp	1 lb.
Feed (10 days)	5 sp	100 lb.
Riding saddle	10 gp	25 lb.
Saddlebags	4 gp	8 lb.
<i>Mount subtotal</i>	<i>16 gp, 5 sp</i>	<i>134 lb.</i>
Bedroll	1 sp	5 lb.
Flint and steel	1 gp	—

Light horse	75 gp	—
Rations (20 days)	10 gp	20 lb.
Soap	5 sp	1 lb.
Tent	10 gp	20 lb.
Traveler's outfit	1 gp	5 lb.
Waterskin	1 gp	4 lb.
<i>Rider subtotal</i>	<i>98 gp, 6 sp</i>	<i>55 lb.</i>
Total	115 gp, 1 sp	189 lb.

SPELUNKING ARRAY

These supplies allow an explorer to safely handle a limited amount of exploration underground.

Item	Cost	Weight
Backpack	2 gp	2 lb.
Bedroll	1 sp	5 lb.
Chalk	1 cp	—
Crowbar	2 gp	5 lb.
Explorer's outfit	10 gp	8 lb.
Flint and steel	1 gp	—
Grappling hook	1 gp	4 lb.
Lamp, hooded	7 gp	2 lb.
Map cases (2)	2 gp	1 lb.
Miner's pick	3 gp	10 lb.
Oil (7 pints)	7 sp	7 lb.
Pole, 10-foot	2 sp	8 lb.
Rations (4 days)	2 gp	4 lb.
Silk rope (50 ft.)	10 gp	5 lb.
Sunrods (3)	6 gp	3 lb.
Waterskin	1 gp	4 lb.
Total	48 gp, 1 cp	68 lb.

WILDERNESS ARRAY

This equipment represents everything a woodsman needs to thrive in the dark wilds, assuming he can survive encounters with the area's residents.

Item	Cost	Weight
Bedroll	1 sp	5 lb.
Bucket	5 sp	2 lb.
Dagger	2 gp	1 lb.
Fishhook	1 sp	—
Fishing net, 25 sq. ft.	4 gp	5 lb.
Flint and steel	1 gp	—
Handaxe	6 gp	3 lb.
Hemp rope (50 ft.)	1 gp	10 lb.
Iron pot	5 sp	10 lb.
Sewing needle	5 sp	—
Shovel	2 gp	8 lb.
Soap	1 gp	2 lb.
Traveler's outfit	1 gp	5 lb.
Waterskin	1 gp	4 lb.
Whetstone	2 cp	1 lb.
Winter blanket	5 sp	3 lb.
Total	21 gp, 2 sp, 2 cp	59 lb.

UNDERDARK ANIMALS

The Underdark is more than merely bare caverns, poison fungus, dark elves, and dangerous predators. Natives and explorers of the land below are familiar with many sorts of strange and deadly animals, which they take as animal companions, special mounts, or fiendish minions. In the sunless realm, these creatures are far more useful than a warhorse.

Druids, paladins, and similar classes with animal companions or special mounts treat these beasts as the equivalents of other creatures for purposes of when they can be chosen and what benefits they gain (as shown in the Underdark Animals sidebar). All of these creatures require exotic saddles to ride.

Some of these creatures have the following special qualities.

Resistance to Poison (Ex): This creature has built up a necessary resistance to toxins, granting it a +4 racial bonus on saving throws against poison.

Skills: A creature with a Climb speed has a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks, and can always choose to take 10 on Climb checks, even if rushed or threatened.

A creature with a Swim speed has a +8 racial bonus on Swim checks, and can always choose to take 10 on Swim checks, even if rushed or threatened. It can use the run action while swimming, provided it swims in a straight line.

DEKAYI

CR 2

N Large animal

Init +0; **Senses** low-light vision, tremorsense 60 ft.; **Listen** +5, **Spot** +0

AC 12, **touch** 9, **flat-footed** 12

hp 25 (3 HD)

Fort +6, **Ref** +3, **Will** +1; +4 vs. poisons

Spd 30 ft. (6 squares), **burrow** 20 ft. (dirt and sand only), **swim** 20 ft.

Melee bite +5 (1d6+4)

Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.

Base Atk +2; **Grp** +10

Abilities Str 18, Dex 10, Con 17, Int 1, Wis 11, Cha 2



SQ low-light vision, resistance to poison, tremorsense

Feats Endurance, Toughness

Skills Listen +5, Swim +13

Environment Underground

Organization Domesticated

Advancement 4–14 HD (Large), 15+ HD (Huge)

This massive serpent has a muscular hump behind its head.

Also called “mulesnakes,” dekayi are common mounts in the dirt tunnels of the shallow Underdark, where they can burrow through sand and dirt (they cannot burrow through stone or other solid materials). A specially shielded saddle allows a rider and his provisions to travel with the dekayi as it burrows.

ELGONN

CR 7

N Large animal

Init +1; **Senses** blindsight 120 ft., darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision ft.; **Listen** +7, **Spot** +7

AC 17, **touch** 10, **flat-footed** 16

hp 76 (9 HD)

Fort +10, **Ref** +7, **Will** +5; +4 vs. poisons

Spd 30 ft. (6 squares), **swim** 30 ft.

Melee bite +13 (2d6+8) and

Melee 2 claws +8 (1d6+4 and poison)

Atk Options poison (DC 18, 1d6 Con/1d6 Con)

Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.

Base Atk +6; **Grp** +18

Abilities Str 27, Dex 13, Con 19, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 10

SQ blindsight, darkvision, low-light vision, resistance to poison, scent

Feats Flyby Attack, Improved Natural Weapon (bite), Improved Natural Weapon (claw), Track

Skills Climb +9, Hide +8, Jump +12, Listen +7, Spot +7, Survival +3, Swim +17

Environment Underground

Organization Solitary

Advancement 10–17 HD (Large), 18–25 HD (Huge)

This dinosaur stands roughly eight-feet tall at the shoulder and measures almost twice as long from tip of tail to nose. It superficially resembles a velociraptor, although its forelimbs are winged claws with jagged ridges.

UNDERDARK ANIMALS

Creature	CR	Equivalent	Light Load	Medium Load	Heavy Load
Dekayi	2	Wolverine	300 lb.	600 lb.	900 lb.
Elgonn	7	Dire bear	692 lb.	1,386 lb.	2,080 lb.
Jagendar	4	Boar	459 lb.	918 lb.	1,380 lb.
Taga'rivvin	1	Wolf	153 lb.	306 lb.	460 lb.

Predators adapted to the Underdark, elgonn are agile dinosaurs at home in any subterranean environment.

Combat

An elgonn prefers to snap its prey's neck with its fierce bite.

Poison (Ex): Injury, Fortitude DC 18, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Skills: Elgonn have a +4 racial bonus on Hide, Listen, and Spot checks. The Hide bonus increases to +8 in areas of natural stone with no vegetation. Elgonn have a +4 racial bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent.

JAGENDAR

CR 4

N Large animal

Init +3; **Senses** blindsight 60 ft., low-light vision; **Listen** +0, **Spot** +0

AC 15, **touch** 12, **flat-footed** 12

hp 45 (7 HD)

Fort +7, **Ref** +8, **Will** +2; +4 vs. poisons

Spd 60 ft. (12 squares), **climb** 30 ft.

Melee bite +9 (2d6+5)

Special Actions improved grab

Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.

Base Atk +5; **Grp** +14

Abilities Str 21, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 1, Wis 10, Cha 4

SQ blindsight, low-light vision, resistance to poison

Feats Endurance, Improved Natural Weapon (bite), Run

Skills Climb +14, Jump +17, Move Silently +12

Environment Underground

Organization Domesticated

Advancement 8–12 HD (Large)

This ebon black, sleek reptile has a lashing whip tail and long, toothy jaws.

Combat

Favored by drow, jagendars use their snapping jaws to hold enemies still while their riders attack.

Blindsight (Ex): Jagendars navigate by sound, with hearing keener than even a bat's (see *Monster Manual*, page 306).

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, an jagendar must hit with its bite. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold on the creature with its mouth. Each round it maintains the hold it deals automatic bite damage.

TAGA'RIVVIN

CR 1

N Large animal

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; **Listen** +1, **Spot** +1

AC 12, **touch** 9, **flat-footed** 12

hp 16 (3 HD)

Fort +4, **Ref** +3, **Will** +1; +4 vs. poisons

Spd 30 ft. (6 squares), **climb** 30 ft.

Melee slam +6 (1d4+5)

Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.

Base Atk +2; **Grp** +11

Abilities Str 21, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 7

SQ darkvision, low-light vision, resistance to poison

Feats Endurance, Skill Focus (Move Silently)

Skills Climb +14, Listen +1, Move Silently +10, Spot +1

Environment Underground

Organization Solitary, pair, or haunt (3–5)

Advancement 4–8 HD (Large)

This hairless albino ape resembles an oversized, wrinkled, and sickly orangutan with long, gangly limbs.

Taga'rivvins (their names mean “better than human” in the language of the drow) are herbivorous apes of the Underdark sometimes ridden by silent patrols of drow rangers.

Skills: Taga'rivvins have a +4 racial bonus on Move Silently checks. ■

PSICRYSTAL SUBSTITUTIONS

The *Expanded Psionics Handbook* presents several psicrystal personalities available to a character who chooses the Psicrystal Affinity feat. You can use the following new psicrystal abilities with your DM's permission.

PSIONIC SUBSTITUTION

A character who possesses a psicrystal might wish to retain its companionship, while at the same time using it to unlock deeper psionic power. By performing a complex ritual that combines meditation and the consumption of special reagents, a character with a psicrystal can enhance its power. This ritual takes one day and consumes gp and

XP from the psicrystal's owner. At the end of the ritual, the psicrystal gains a new power usable once per day. Upon reaching the appropriate level (as noted under its description), this ritual can be performed again, at a greater cost, but adding a more powerful ability. The lesser ability must be in place before the greater ability is added. The greater ability can also be used once per day. Triggering a psicrystal ability usually requires a standard action (but see each description below).

All effects are treated as psi-like abilities of a manifester level equal to the character's total psionic class level. Unless otherwise noted, an effect lasts for the remainder of the encounter in which it is activated.

Enhancement	GP Cost	XP Cost
Lesser	300	300
Greater	900	900

PSICRYSTAL PERSONALITIES

Each psicrystal personality type offers different substitution abilities.

ARTISTE

Lesser: Spend a standard action to instantly sculpt a real object from ectoplasm that takes up an empty 10-foot cube anywhere within 30 feet. This block has hardness 5 and a number of hit points equal to 10 times your psionic character level. The block can't be moved, but it can be destroyed. It stops movement and lasts for 1 hour or until the block is destroyed.

Greater (8th): Spend a standard action to instantly sculpt a real object from ectoplasm that creates a wall up to 20 feet tall, 1 foot thick, and up to 20 feet long anywhere within 50 feet. The wall has hardness 10 and a number of hit points equal to 20 times your psionic character level. It stops movement and lasts for 1 hour or until the wall is destroyed.



BULLY

Lesser: Spend a standard action to make a ranged bull rush attack against a single foe within 30 feet. To make this attack, first make a ranged touch attack. Next, instead of making a Strength check, you roll 1d20 and add a modifier equal to 15 plus your psionic character level. Your target opposes this roll with a standard Strength check. From here, resolve the bull rush attempt normally. You do not move as a result of the effect. Treat this instantaneous effect as a psionic power with a level equal to your psionic character class level.

Greater (16th): As above, save that you can spend another standard action on the round after you make use of one of these abilities to immediately use it again.

COWARD

Lesser: Spend a swift action to gain a +5 bonus on your Hide check (instead of the static +3 normally offered).

Greater (8th): Spend a swift action to gain a +10 bonus on your Hide check (instead of the static +3 normally offered).

FRIENDLY

Lesser: Spend a swift action to gain a +5 bonus on your Diplomacy check (instead of the static +3 normally offered).

Greater (8th): Spend a swift action to gain a +10 bonus on your Diplomacy check (instead of the static +3 normally offered).

HERO

Lesser: Spend an immediate action to gain immunity to poison for 10 rounds.

Greater (8th): Spend an immediate action to gain immunity to death effects for 10 rounds. Death effects include magical or psionic death effects, energy drain, and any negative energy effects (such as from *inflict* spells or *chill touch*). This substitution ability doesn't remove negative levels that you have already gained, nor can it affect the saving throw necessary 24 hours after gaining a negative level.

LIAR

Lesser: Spend a standard action to form a quasi-real membrane around

yourself (as concealing amorpha). You remain visible within the translucent, amorphous enclosure. This distortion grants you concealment (opponents have a 20% miss chance), thanks to the rippling membrane encasing your form.

Greater (6th): As above, save you gain total concealment (50% miss chance), as greater concealing amorpha.

METICULOUS

Lesser: Spend a swift action to gain a +5 bonus on your Search check (instead of the static +3 normally offered).

Greater (8th): Spend a swift action to gain a +10 bonus on your Search check (instead of the static +3 normally offered).

NIMBLE

Lesser: Spend an immediate action to reroll initiative (without the +2 bonus normally granted by this psycrystal); keep the second roll even if it is worse than the original.

Greater (8th): Spend an immediate action to reroll initiative (without the +2 bonus normally granted by this psycrystal); keep the better of the two rolls.

OBSERVANT

Lesser: Spend a swift action to ignore one target's concealment (20% miss chance), whatever its source, for 10 rounds. If a target has greater than a 20% miss chance, subtract 20% from the higher chance to calculate your miss chance.

Greater (8th): Spend a swift action to ignore one target's concealment (50% miss chance), whatever its source, for 10 rounds.

POISED

Lesser: Spend an immediate action to automatically take only half damage against the full effects of an area effect if you failed your saving throw. Although you dive out of the way of the worst effects of the area effect, you end the action prone.

Greater (11th): If you succeed at a save made against an area effect that deals damage, you may spend an immediate action to take no damage from the effect.

RESOLVED

Lesser: Spend an immediate action to gain immunity versus a single compulsion effect.

Greater (11th): Spend an immediate action to gain immunity versus all mind-affecting effects for 10 rounds.

SAGE

Lesser: Spend a swift action to gain a +5 bonus on your Knowledge check (instead of the static +3 normally offered) in which you have at least 1 rank.

Greater (8th): Spend a swift action to gain a +10 bonus on your Knowledge check (instead of the static +3 normally offered) in which you have at least 4 ranks.

SINGLE-MINDED

Lesser: Spend a swift action to attempt to regain your psionic focus on a roll of 11 or better on 1d20.

Greater (8th): Spend a swift action to attempt to regain your psionic focus on a roll of 6 or better on 1d20.

SNEAKY

Lesser: Spend an immediate action to reroll your Move Silently check (without the +2 bonus normally granted by this psycrystal); keep the second roll even if it is worse than the original.

Greater (8th): Spend an immediate action to reroll initiative (without the +2 bonus normally granted by this psycrystal); keep the better of the two rolls.

SYMPATHETIC

Lesser: Spend a standard action to instantly sculpt a real object from ectoplasm that takes the shape of a crystal annulus 1 foot in diameter that hovers in the air before you (in your square). The gemstone ring has hardness 8 and 10 hit points and lasts until your psycrystal is reactivated or it is destroyed. While it lasts, any conversation you conduct through the ring with a conversation partner within 10 feet of you grants you a total +5 bonus on any Sense Motive checks you make during the conversation.

Greater (8th): As the lesser ability, but the bonus on Sense Motive checks increases to +10. ■

COMBAT STRIKES

At heart, combat involves degrading or destroying an enemy's ability to fight. There are times when a warrior must use sheer strength and power to kill his foe. At other times, however, defeating a powerful or supernatural enemy demands creative tactics. Instead of dealing hit point damage, these feats cause combat conditions such as

blindness and fatigue, or weaken a creature's attacks.

Warriors have developed specialized combat tactics designed to exploit their enemy's weaknesses. The following tactical feats allow a character to hinder an enemy or take away his advantage.

Tactical feats were introduced in *Complete Warrior*.

BLINDING STRIKE [TACTICAL]

You know special attacks for temporarily blinding a foe or degrading a gaze attack.

Prerequisites: Dex 13, Power Attack, base attack bonus +5.

Benefit: The Blinding Strike feat enables the use of three tactical maneuvers.

Blind the Foe: To use this maneuver, you must use a full-round action to make an attack with a melee weapon using your Power Attack feat. The penalty you take on your attack must be -5 or more. If the attack succeeds, instead of taking damage, your opponent must make a Fortitude save or become blind for 1d4 rounds. The DC for the Fortitude save equals 10 plus the value of the penalty you took on the attack (minimum DC 15).

Weaken Gaze: To use this maneuver, you must use a full-round action to make an attack with a melee weapon using your Power Attack feat against a creature with a gaze attack. The penalty you take on your attack must be -5 or more. If the attack succeeds, you deal normal damage and also degrade one of the target's gaze attacks. For the next 10 rounds, the creature's gaze attack save DC decreases by 2. Each successful Weaken Gaze attack further reduces the save DC by 2. Against a monster with more than one gaze attack, such as a beholder, this maneuver only affects one gaze attack at a



time. In such an instance, you choose which gaze attack you affect.

Eye Gouge: To use this maneuver, you must use a full-round action to make an attack with a melee weapon using your Power Attack feat against a creature with a gaze attack. This maneuver provokes attacks of opportunity. If you take damage from an attack of opportunity the maneuver is disrupted and your turn ends. Otherwise, you may make an attack using your Power Attack feat. The penalty you take on your attack must be -5 or more. If the attack succeeds, your opponent takes normal damage and must also make a Fortitude save or lose the use of its gaze attack for 1d4 rounds. The DC for the Fortitude save equals 10 plus the value of the penalty you took on the attack (minimum DC 15). Against a monster with more than one gaze attack, such as a beholder, this maneuver only affects one gaze attack at a time. In such an instance, you choose which gaze attack you affect.

Special: Constructs, oozes, and creatures without visual organs (including most undead) are immune to the effects of these maneuvers.

A fighter may select Blinding Strike as one of his fighter bonus feats.

DEAFENING BLOW [TACTICAL]

You know just where to strike an enemy to deafen him for a short time.

Prerequisites: Str 13, Power Attack, base attack bonus +4.

Benefit: The Deafening Blow feat enables the use of three tactical maneuvers.

Battle Clangor: To use this maneuver, you must make an attack with a bludgeoning melee weapon using your Power Attack feat. The penalty you take on your attack must be -4 or more. If the attack succeeds, instead of dealing damage, you knock your opponent's head with such precision that he becomes overly sensitive to sound. For 1 minute, he takes a -4 penalty on saving throws against sonic attacks and language-dependent effects.

Disorienting Blow: To use this maneuver, you must make an attack with a bludgeoning melee weapon weighing at least 4 pounds using your Power Attack feat. The penalty you take on your attack must be -4 or more. If the attack succeeds, instead of taking damage, your opponent must make a Fortitude save or become shaken for 1d4 rounds. The DC for the Fortitude save equals 10 plus the value of the penalty you took on the attack (minimum DC 14).

Deafen the Foe: To use this maneuver, you must use a full-round action to make an attack with a bludgeoning melee weapon using your Power Attack feat. The penalty you take on your attack must be -4 or more. If the attack succeeds, in addition to taking normal damage, your opponent must make a Fortitude save or be deafened for 1d4 rounds. The DC for the Fortitude save equals 10 plus the value of the penalty you took on the attack (minimum DC 14).

Special: Constructs, oozes, undead, and creatures without the ability to hear are immune to the effects of these maneuvers.

A fighter may select Deafening Blow as one of his fighter bonus feats.

EXHAUSTING DEFENSE [TACTICAL]

Your fighting style invites attackers to wear themselves out against your stalwart defense.

Prerequisites: Combat Expertise, Dodge, base attack bonus +5.

Benefit: The Exhausting Defense feat enables the use of three tactical maneuvers.

Fatigue the Foe: To use this maneuver, you must fight using the Combat Expertise feat for at least three consecutive rounds against the same opponent, whom you have also designated as the target of your Dodge feat. The penalty you take on your attacks must be -2 or more. After the first three rounds, each round your opponent continues to attack you he must make a DC 15 Fortitude save or become fatigued. If you stop attack-

ing that opponent, or he ceases attacking you, you must restart the three rounds fighting with Combat Expertise before using this maneuver against that opponent again. An opponent affected by this maneuver remains fatigued until the end of the encounter.

Exhaust the Foe: To use this maneuver, you must first face a fatigued opponent. In addition, you must fight using the Combat Expertise feat for at least three consecutive rounds against the same opponent, whom you have also designated as the target of your Dodge feat. Rounds that count toward your Fatigue the Foe maneuver do not count for this maneuver. The penalty you take on your attacks must be -4 or more. Beginning on the third round your target attacks you, it must make a DC 15 Fortitude save or become exhausted. If you break off combat with your target, you must restart the two rounds fighting with Combat Expertise before using this maneuver against that creature again. If you stop attacking that opponent, or he ceases attacking you, you must restart the two rounds fighting with Combat Expertise before using this maneuver against that opponent again. An opponent affected by this maneuver remains exhausted until the end of the encounter, at which time he becomes fatigued until he rests.

The Best Offense: To use this maneuver, you must face a fatigued or exhausted opponent. You must then spend a round using the total defense action. The round after that, you must then attack your foe without using Combat Expertise at all. For that round, your foe is flat-footed against your attacks and you gain a +2 bonus on all attacks against that foe until your next turn.

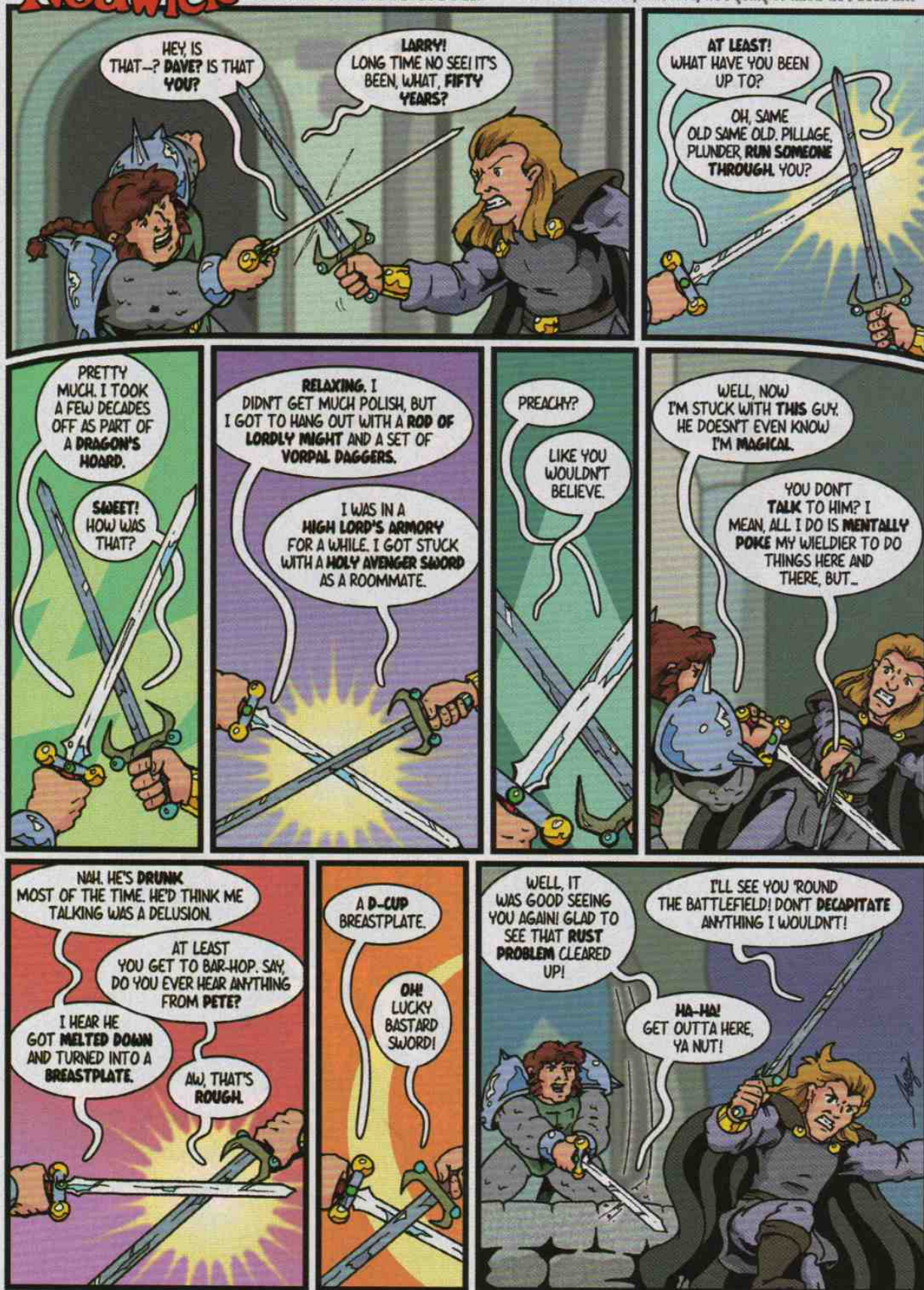
Special: Constructs, oozes, undead, and creatures immune to fatigue are immune to these maneuvers.

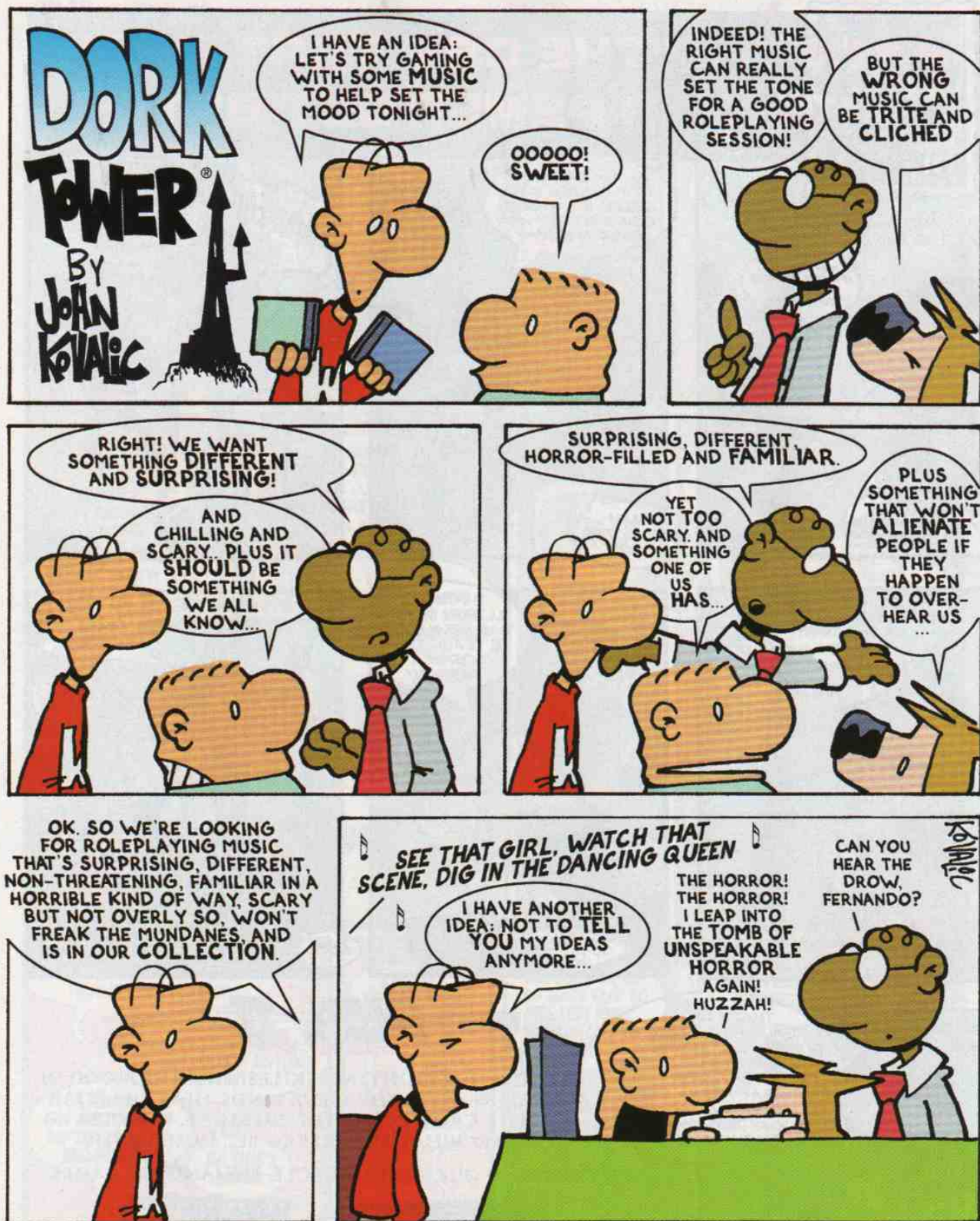
A fighter may select Exhausting Defense as one of his fighter bonus feats. ■

Nodwick

by Aaron Williams
www.nodwick.com

"And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, for if you hit a man with a plowshare, he's going to know he's been hit."



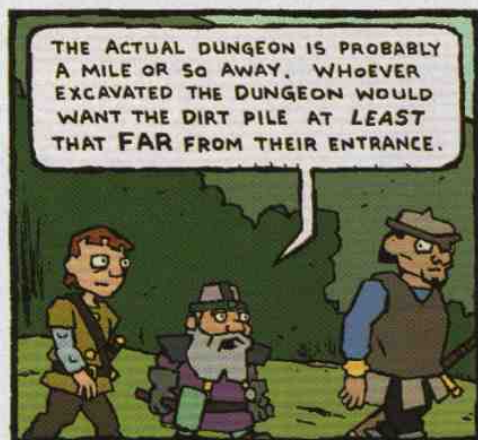
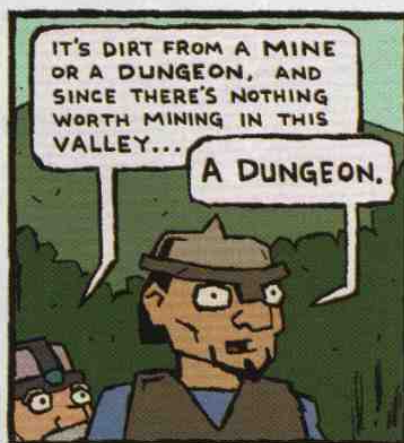


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The Order of the Stick

by Rich Burlew

